

Moussa Ahmad

# **Developing Integration by evaluating Government Program for 2016–2019**

Propositions for Decision Makers



ACTA WASAENSIA 471



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<b>Tiivistelmä</b> <p>Vuosina 2015–2016 Suomeen jätettyjen turvapaikkahakemusten määrä kasvoi nopeasti, ja Suomi vastaanotti noin 35 000 hakemusta. Tämä muutos on edellyttänyt Suomen valtion kotouttamispolitiikan uudelleenarviointia. Eduskunnan tarkastusvaliokunta ilmoitti marraskuussa 2018, että nykyinen kotouttamispolitiikka ei toimi, ja tilanteen korjaamiseksi tarvitaan uusia ratkaisuja.</p> <p>Tutkimuksessa arvioitiin valtion kotouttamisohjelmaa 2016–2019 erityisesti pakolaisten näkökulmasta soveltamalla monimenetelmällisyyttä, palvelumuotoilun timanttimalia yhdessä rakentavalla ratkaisukeskeisellä lähestymistavalla. Tämä on yksi ensimmäisistä tutkimuksista Suomessa, joissa käsitellään asiaa johtamistieteiden avulla. Tutkimuksessa pyrittiin myös selvittämään, miksi Suomen kotouttamisohjelma ei toiminut ja mitä ehdotuksia voitaisiin tarjota suomalaisille päätöksentekijöille. Tutkimuksen mukaan suurin osa tutkimukseen osallistuneista oli vahvasti samaa mieltä Suomen kotouttamisohjelman toimenpiteistä. Ongelma ei ole itse ohjelmassa, vaan sen erilaisissa ensisijaisissa tavoitteissa pakolaisten ja Suomen hallituksen välillä, sekä valtion kotouttamistoimenpiteiden toteuttamisessa.</p> <p>Suomen hallituksen perheenyhdistämiseen ja kansalaisuusvaatimukseen liittyvä politiikka on vaikuttanut kielteisesti kotoutumiseen ja valtion kotouttamisohjelman onnistumiseen muuttamalla pakolaisten uuden elämänpolun Suomessa pitkäksi ja kalliiksi, sekä pakottamalla osan pakolaisista kielitaidon esittelijöiksi kielen oppijoiden sijaan Suomen kansalaisuuden saamiseksi. Havaitsimme myös, että porkkana ja keppi -politiikkaa käytettiin väärin, ja oli harvinaista ohjata ulkomaalaisia korkeiden työllisyystulosten työvoimapalveluihin. Tämä tutkimus kehitti suomalaisille päätöksentekijöille, erityisesti Suomen työ- ja elinkeinoministeriölle, ehdotuksia kotouttamisen kultaisen tunnin strategian käyttämisestä ja kotoutumisen edistämisestä luomalla uusia polkuja maahanmuuttajille. Viimeinen ehdotus on kotoutumispalvelujen tarjoaminen saman katon alla suunnittelemalla yhden luukun ohjauskeskus (Koto-talo).</p> <p>Tämä tutkimus on esimerkki siitä, miten palvelumuotoilua voidaan soveltaa pakolaisten näkökulman asettamiseksi vahvemmin tulevaisuuden työstrategian keskipisteeseen. Lisäksi tutkimus selittää, miksi on tärkeää korostaa kansalaisten näkökulmaa tässä korkean tason ministerityössä.</p>		
<b>Asiasanat</b> Palvelumuotoilu, päätöksenteko, kotoutuminen, pakolaiset, työllistäminen		



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<b>Abstract</b> <p>From 2015–2016, around 38,000 asylum seekers flocked to Finland. This change has prompted the Finnish government to reevaluate its integration policy. In November 2018, the Finnish Parliament Audit Committee declared that the present integration policy is not working, and new solutions are needed to remedy the situation.</p> <p>The study evaluated the Finnish integration program from 2016–2019, focusing on the perspective of refugees by applying a mixed methodology, service design diamond model with a constructive problem-solving research approach. This is one of the first studies in Finland to deal with the issue by using management science. The study also sought to find out why the Finnish Integration Program didn't work and what propositions could be offered to Finnish policymakers. The study indicates that most of the participants in this study strongly agreed with the measures of Finnish integration program. The problem is not in the program itself, but in the different priorities between the refugees and the Finnish government and in the implementation of the Finnish integration measures. Finnish government policies related to family reunification and citizenship requirements have negatively affected integration and the success of the Finnish government integration program by changing refugees' new life path in Finland to a long and high-cost one, forcing some of the refugees to be language skills demonstration seekers instead of language learners to get Finnish citizenship. Also, we found that the carrot-and-stick policy was misused, and it rarely steered foreigners into employment services with high employment outcomes. This research developed propositions for Finnish decision makers, especially the Finnish Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment for using integration's golden hour strategy and promoting integration by creating new paths for migrants. The last suggestion is to provide integration services under one roof by designing an integration one-stop guidance center (Koto-talo).</p> <p>This study is an example of how service design can be applied to position the refugees' perspective more strongly in the center of a ministerial strategy for work in the future and explains why it is important to emphasize the citizen's perspective in this high-level ministerial work.</p>		
<b>Keywords</b> Service design, decision making, integration, refugees, employment		



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To the souls I miss, Dad and Mom, not a day goes by without you, while writing my every single word and while taking any step in my life. I know that your souls are hovering around me, guarding me. I am sure that no one in the whole world would be happier than you in these moments as you look at me from the sky. Bless you!

I am fortunate for the support I get from my wife, Azza. Her endless support and love helped me to write this thesis. I couldn't imagine life without her by my side.

My dove, the bird of the heart, the spring of life, what you are holding today, it was never a day but for you. My beloved ones, my children, I recommend Luqman the Wise's, advice to you.

Last but not least, I also want to thank my family and those friends who silently supported and motivated me, even though they are not aware of it, and everyone else whom I forgot to mention here.

إلى الأرواح التي افتقدتها .... أبي ... أمي ..... لم يمر يوم من دونكم، وأنا اكتب كل كلمة، وأنا أقوم باي خطوة في حياتي أعلم بأن طيفكم يحوم حولي ويحرسني. انا على يقين انه لا يوجد شخص في العالم كله سيكون أسعد منكم في هذه اللحظات وأنتم تنظرون إلى من السماء....

حمامة الأيك، عصفورة القلب، ربيع العمر..... ما تمسكون به اليوم، لم يكن يوماً إلا من أجلكم.... احبائي، أبنائي، أوصيكم بوصايا لقمان...

عزة الروح... لا أدرك كيف يمكن للعمر أن يكون دونك! لا أعلم.. لا أستطيع أن أتخيل...كيف الأيام دون انفسك حولي!

Moussa Ahmad

Helsinki, June 2021

## DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the Palestinian writer's soul of Ghassan Kanafani.

They tried to melt me like a piece of sugar in a hot cup of tea and they exerted ... a wondrous effort for that, God witnessing!

I had thought about it at length recently, *O sir...* I was walking in the street, suddenly, I had a eureka moment, like a large slab of glass, it soon shattered, and I felt its shrapnel scattered throughout my body from the inside, said to myself.

"*Aha! - then what?*", see, just a small question that a person could ask even after fifteen years, strangely enough, this time, this question was solid, dry and I could say definitively ... at that moment, a long dark trench opened up without end. *Yes, then what?* Let me whisper, it seems that there is no "*then what*" at all, pardon me sir, there is no "*then what*" at all ... seems to me that my life, our life, a straight line that goes quietly and humiliated to the side of my case line, but the two lines are parallel, never meet.

*O sir*, if I have gathered throughout a harsh period of extraordinary courage to tell the truth, then all the honour is not mine, I have the honour to say only, and you preserve all the honour of authorship .... don't you see? YOU who have prepared me, hour after hour, day after day and year after year to this result.

*O sir*, you have tried to melt me, you have tried that with a continuous effort that does not get tired nor get bored. *O Sir*, Shall I be cocky saying that you failed? No, you have succeeded to a great extent and extraordinarily. Can't you see? you were able to transfer me ... a deus ex machina from human to a case. Dissolving a million soul together, making them one single case, is not an easy task. Therefore, I think you allow it if that long time is needed. You have lost those million souls their unique individual traits. You do not need to distinguish and classify; you are in front of a case now. You may think that it's a thievery, well; all of them are thieves. Or betrayal, well; they are all traitors. So why fatigue, tiredness, and complicated human looks?

*Sir*, there is no "*then*" This is an appalling fact, still true anyway ... My role in life has been critically shaped that I am an individual, just a pig.

As a case group of commercial, tourism and leadership value, I have thought for a long time before declaring this.

They are, first of all, a tourist value, so every visitor must go to the camps, refugees should stand in line and overlook their faces with all the possible sorrow, more

than the original, so the tourist passes over them, takes pictures, and gets a little sad.

Then, secondly, they are a leadership value, they are the material of national speeches, humanitarian banners and popular auctions, *see sir*, they have become one of the institutions of political life that generate profit, right and left.

*Sir*: Our institution provides other countless services.

For example, we are the most appropriate group to be a lesson for the rest ..... The political conditions are intractable, difficult? Then hit camps, pull out some refugees; all if you can. Give your citizens a hard lesson without hurting them, but why hurt them if you have a dedicated group that can conduct your experiments in its yard. If one of the projects fails, then say that the Palestinians caused this failure, how? Come on! No much thinking! Say for example that they passed from there, or that they wanted to participate, or anything else.

Except that, we are a curse. Often thieves, and greedy. *Sir!*

Greedy! we want to absorb everything here ... even dirt ... this is the role that was drawn for us ... and we have to do it, whether we like it or not, *but sir*, there is a simple problem disturbing me, and I feel that I must say it, out of many people, If he feels that he occupies a space in the place, he begins to ask: *Then what??*

The ugliest thing, if he finds out that he has no right of "*then what*", he catches something like insanity, saying to himself in a low voice, *what life is this!, death is away better!*. but the screaming, *sir*, is an infection.. soon everyone will cries out at once; "*what life is this!, death is away better!* " ... but since people usually do not like death that much, they must think about something else, *Sir*.

Quoted and modified it from (Beyond Borders/1962) by Ghassan Kanafani; translated by Alaa Saleh, great thanks to him.

Moussa Ahmad

Helsinki, June 2021



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# 1 INTRODUCTION

From 2015–2016, around 38,000 asylum seekers flocked to Finland. This size wave had not been seen in Finland since World War II (Sarvimäki 2017). Around 38,000 asylum seekers arrived, which is about 10 times the figure in 2013 and 2014. (From 01/2015 to 12/2018, Finland received around 48,000.). As a result of these flows, public discussion escalated in Finnish society and media about refugees and their integration. This also prompted the Finnish government to reevaluate integration policy and legislation, implementation practices, resource allocations, and official processes (FMEE 2016a).

On the ground, the Finnish government responded in three ways. First, it handled the current situation by increasing reception centers from 22–144 and increased immigration service workers from 365 to 508 from August to December 2015. Second, it reduced the pull factors for refugees to Finland. Third, it published the action plan on integration in May 2016 and formulated policies by the Ministerial Working Group (Sarvimäki 2017).

Entering new migrants into the labor market, as soon as possible, is the main goal of the Finnish integration (Saukkonen 2016). Nevertheless, in November 2018, the Finnish Parliament Audit Committee declared that the present integration policy was not working, and new solutions were needed to remedy the situation (FPCA 2019).

Meanwhile, up to 75% of GDP in developed countries is generated from services, while services receive far fewer resources for development than goods. Unsurprisingly, customers are frequently unsatisfied with provided services (Segelström 2013). In Finland, according to the Confederation of Finnish Industries (2019), the share of services in GDP has increased as the share of industry has decreased. The service sectors play a key role in the Finnish economy as more than two-thirds of GDP is generated in services. Because society has evolved considerably, the public sector decision-makers face new challenges as a consequence of the changes in the economy, the distribution of people of various ages, native language population (Statistics Finland 2019) also people by themselves. People now have far greater control as they have access to far more information, and they are more knowledgeable about their rights (the Prime Minister of UK 2007) and changes in services structure (Vuontisjärvi 2015). As services are developing in general, better public services are demanded by users and the government (FMEE 2010).

Integration as a service is also needed to develop to meet users' needs. According to Kurki (2019), development of the integration policy in Finland has been based on the experiences of the Nordic countries, other EU countries, and within the framework of international agreements and obligations.

As part of cross-ministerial collaboration, the Finnish Government Integration Program was prepared by a government-wide cooperation group on integration, which was composed of representatives from different Finnish ministries (FMEE 2016a). Considering this, an integration program emerged from the objectives of the government itself and does not sufficiently take the motives and needs of the users into account. Program measures were designed and implemented without involving users. As a result, ineffective measures neglected social factors, such as family and cultural preferences. Also, because representatives often come from a different socio-economic and cultural context than their constituents, human-centered service design methods for facilitating empathy can be crucial for ensuring that the program meets users' needs and is suitable for their context of use.

In this study, we evaluate the Finnish integration program and address the question, "Why didn't the Finnish integration program VALKO II work?" by using service design as a tool for addressing "wicked problems" and seeing what propositions could be offered from a service design and construction problem-solving approach to Finnish policymakers.

## 1.1 Research background and motivation

### 1.1.1 The problem needs thinking outside the box

In 2015, the global refugee crisis challenged both Western and Third World countries' asylum systems, accommodation capacity, and integration systems. The influx has strained many experienced national systems' ability to handle refugees. As the crisis began to subside in Europe, politicians breathed a sigh of relief and turned their attention to two issues: expecting and hindering the next crisis and reforming integration and migration policies. Nevertheless, politicians don't always realize how integration objectives can be achieved successfully. So creative migration and integration policies are needed (Papademetriou, Benton and Banulescu-Bogdan 2017).

The 2016 EU Action Plan on Integration resulted from the question of how to integrate new migrants successfully after the refugee crisis in 2015 to the top of the political agenda in the European Union (Hernes et al. 2019).

First, we would like to briefly speak about how integration is generally evaluated in Finland; migrant's integration is often criticized in public discussion. This made the task even more difficult for the Finnish government when it was surprised by the waves of refugees, as most European governments were. Furthermore, the government issued an action plan in May 2016 for integrating immigrants and later the official integration program was published as aiming to facilitate progress toward employment in Finland by assisting newcomers to be able to enter normal housing, education, and training briskly and by modernizing and streamlining the integration system so that it is more flexible and closely targeted to individual immigrants' needs (Saukkonen 2016).

There is a much literature on immigrant integration outside the Scandinavian context, but systematic analyses of its effects is lacking (Hernes et al.2019). Goodman and Wright (2015:1887) said, "In light of massive changes observed across Western Europe to implement more obligatory integration policies, a systematic examination of policy effects is warranted". The integration of disadvantaged groups into the labor market like refugees is of supreme interest in Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and Finland (Karlsdóttir et al. 2017).

Hernes et al. (2019:14) said, "Because immigrant policies are highly politicized, studies within this field risk fueling the stigmatization of immigrants". Along these lines, new research is needed that should be beneficial and pertinent to policy (Ruist 2017) and for providing better knowledge base for decision- making and for creating a better integration policies. Research should explore the differing implications of refugee integration policies rather than focusing on the employment gap or economic cost of refugee unemployment (Pyrhönen, Leinonen & Martikainen 2017) and (Hernes et al. 2019).

From another side, in recent years, many governments have reformed public service depending on service design as a tool for changing management and for addressing "wicked problems". The focus of public service reform has seen a change in attention to service users instead of service providers. There has been a switch from service provision issues such as choice, paying more attention to the needs of the people who use public services rather than providers, and performance against targets (UK Cabinet Office 2007).

### 1.1.2 The author's background is an additional source of motivation

My motivation for this research is my relation to Finnish integration. I moved to Finland in 2009 and found, like other migrants, that fitting into the Finnish labor market was a struggle; at the same time, as Abdulla (2017:50) did, I tried “to keep both feet firmly on the ground.” During my integration journey in Finland, I became a customer of the Employment and Economic Development Office, where a study instructor tried to push me to one of the few undoubtedly valuable jobs for migrants in Finland. She said, “If you want to get a job in Finland, you should start from zero by studying at a practical nurse vocational school,” even though I had a French master's degree and international work experience in many positions. The best one of them was as a national expert in the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO). If I had followed her plan, my name might be on Tuuli Kurki's list on her research page 31–32, “Immigrant-Ness as (Mis)Fortune? Immigrantization through Integration Policies and Practices in Education,” as other highly qualified migrants who are applying for practical nurse training.

During the refugee crisis of 2015, I got involved in issues regarding immigrants and their integration. I realized how much discussion concerning issues regarding the integration of immigrants was in the Finnish media. I was not alone in this, many researchers recognized that, stories of refugees and expected labor market performance by them filled the media in Finland and captured the public's imagination, like everywhere in Europe (Sarvimäki 2017). I wondered if Finland could manage it, especially because Finland hasn't a long experience in integration, as the OECD report (2018) mentioned above. Finland doesn't have a long history of hosting international migrants, and I was afraid that Scenario 3 (anti-immigrant Finland) would become a reality as was predicted in 2009 by Maria Riala in “Second-Generation Immigrants on the Finnish Labor Market in 2020.” My belief is Finnish policy affects not only second-generation immigrants but also all migrants.

As for my professional background, on an international level, I worked as a consultant for the International Organization for Migration (IOM). On the national level, I worked as a migrant consultant for the Info-lango project, which was supported by EU funding and the Finnish Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment funding. On the regional level, I worked as an integration specialist for the Uusimaa Employment and Economic Development Office (PES Office). On the municipality level, I worked as a services counselor for the City of Espoo-Immigrants Services Office. If I want to classify my work experiences depending on integration phases, in the orientation phase, I worked with IOM, which

provides pre-departure orientation for Finland-bound quota refugees. In the integration period phase, I worked for the PES Office. My work with Info-lango was for both an integration phase and an after-integration phase. So, my wide experience relating to this issue is from different perspectives, depending on organizations and their understanding of integration and their goals of services provided from that organization, such as social integration and labor market integration. In addition to that, I have my own experiences as an integration services user.

Also, I had the same feeling as Abdulla (2017:50) when she contacted the newly arrived migrants to do her research and I saw the similarities between us: “This made my contact with them easier, as they confided in me and shared with me their thoughts, experiences, and dreams. If I had had a different background, I believe it would have been more difficult to step into the participants’ lives.”

## 1.2 Research gap, significance of the study, and research questions

Actually, we didn’t find anything better than a NordForsk report of 2017 to illustrate the methodological research gap in this field.

The NordForsk report is an important policy paper conducted by Pyrhönen et al. (2017) for reviewing and mapping Nordic migration and integration research and for identifying future research prospects. The study is based on two main sources: first is a qualitative interview with 56 Nordic experts on immigration and integration and the second is an online survey of 365 responds from Nordic migration and integration research networks and institutions. As a result, integration, forced migration, labor market, and governance and law were identified as the top four areas with future research needs.

Research regarding refugees has moved toward the top of the list from Figure 1 to Figure 2. No doubt, this reflects the increasing refugees arriving in Europe (Pyrhönen et al. 2017).

Here we would like to highlight the most important points mentioned in the report from our point of view related to my study.

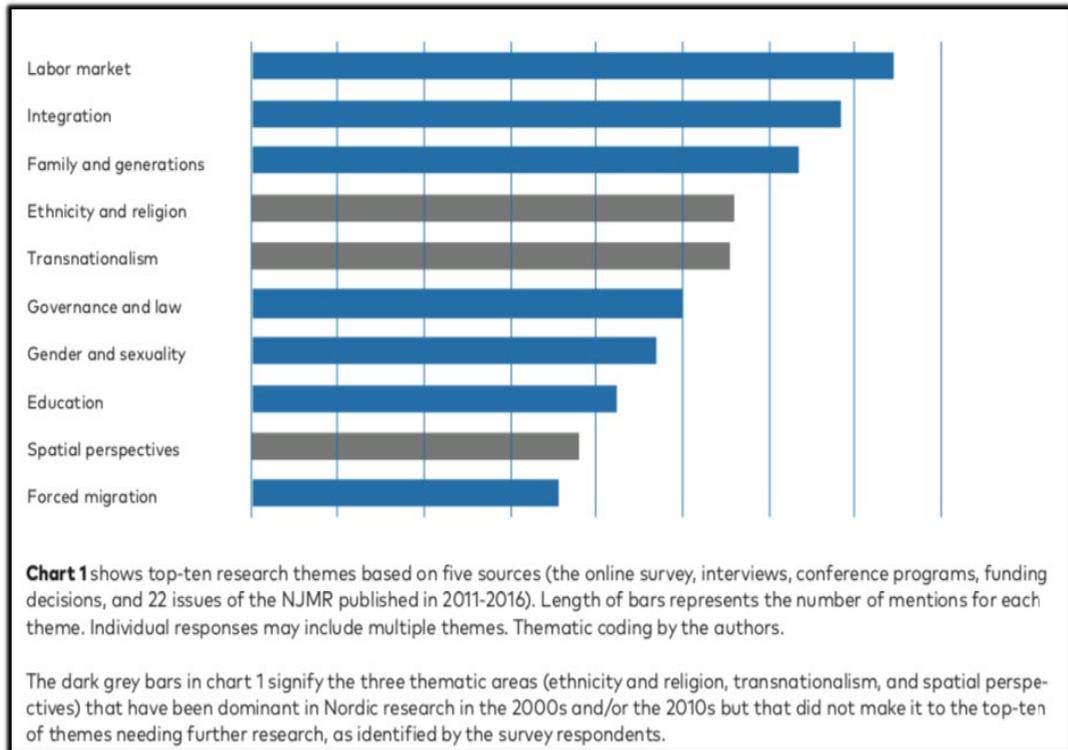
- *Researchers articulated a clear need to “revisit” integration research in multiple ways. This extends to methodological considerations. Indeed, as Chart 2 reveals, methodological questions appeared among*

*the future research needs most often mentioned by the survey respondents (Pyrhönen et al. 2017:34).*

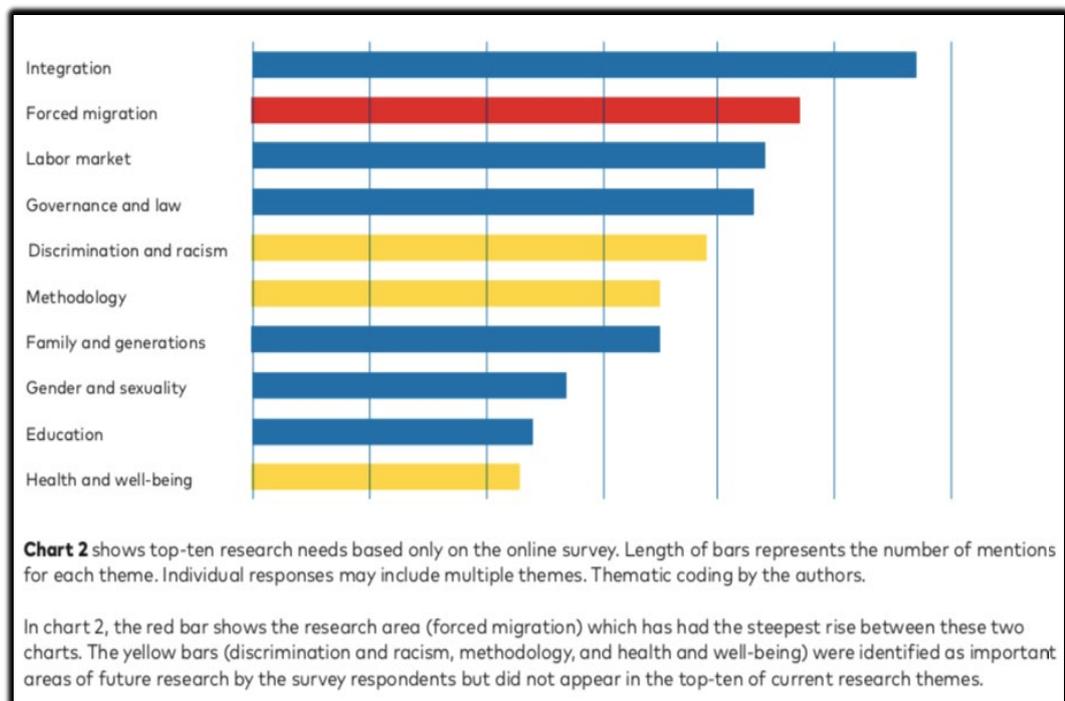
- *Researchers should be incentivized to develop harmonized mixed-method approaches and learn to use each other's data more consistently and on a more regular basis. [---] The respondents also highlighted the importance of combining qualitative and quantitative methods, another point echoed by the experts in their interviews (Pyrhönen et al. 2017: 34–35).*
- *Many researchers saw it as necessary to depart from “top-down” studies that take migrants as research objects but offer few possibilities for an empowering research design and rarely question the underlying assumptions that guide research (Pyrhönen et al. 2017:35).*
- *We need more research that makes use of literature and media studies and assesses how different policies shape the migrants' experience “from the inside”. Most researchers expressed a need to know more about the everyday lives of migrants for the purpose of better defining the goals of an integration policy (Pyrhönen et al. 2017:36).*

To sum up, this study covered research gaps goals as follows:

- Revisit integration research in multiple ways.
- Use novel tools with mixed-methods approaches to illustrate integration policy failure.
- Do no more top-down studies; migrants are not research objects. Research evaluated integration service/policy through refugee/user-satisfaction /reaction /experiences.



**Figure 1.** Current research themes (Pyrhönen et al. 2017)



**Figure 2.** Future research needs (Pyrhönen et al. 2017)

Furthermore, refugees should have a role in the creating, promoting, and implementing of integration policies to improve the legitimacy as well as the efficacy of integration policies (Wolffhardt, Conte & Huddleston 2019). That's why it is so important, as confirmed in the Ninth Common Basic Principle for Immigrant Integration Policy in the EU (Council of The European Union 2004), to allow immigrants a voice in the creation of policies related to them and to consult refugees on issues concerning their matters on a national level as well as on local levels. The benefits from refugees' participation are not only in strengthening their sense of belonging and fostering their active citizenship but also enhancing the quality and effectiveness of integration measures (Wolffhardt et al. 2019).

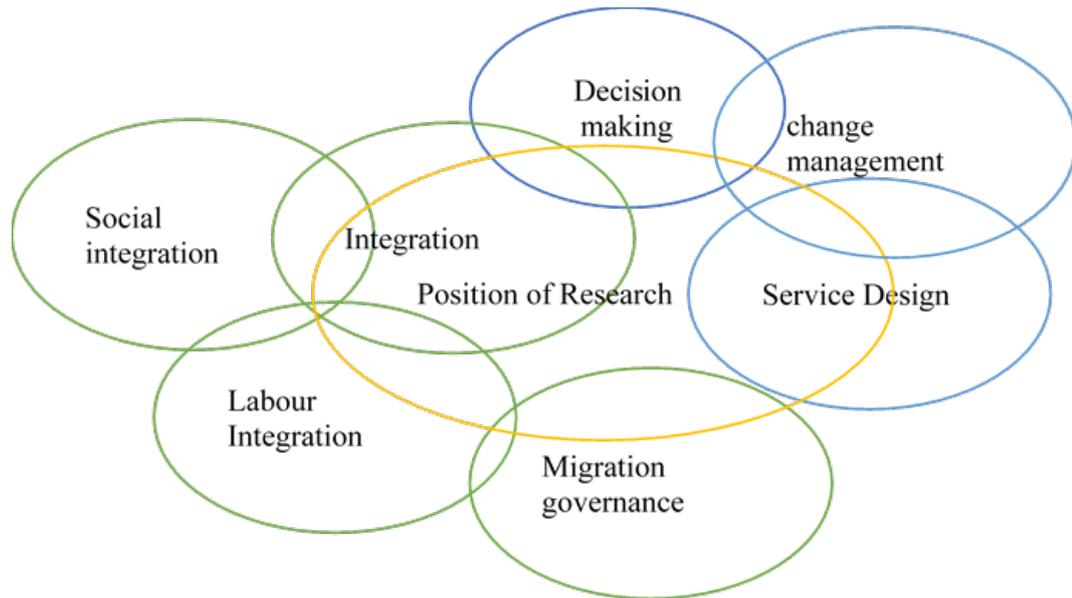
The benefit is highlighting on an area where scientific study is lacking, such as migrants' personal opinions (Abdulla 2017).

Three sets of variables have been identified in previous studies that affect the labor market integration: individual characteristics and human capital, different program measures, and local structural conditions (Bevelander and Lundh 2007). Thus, if one variable is different, the similarity of others doesn't make sense, and one is not sure the results will be the same. Finland relies on copying integration models like the Nordic and Dutch models without having a similarity of conditions; that's why the models don't have the same results. A general evaluation of the Finnish case is needed to answer the main question, "Why didn't the Finnish Integration Program for 2016–2019 work?" as well as what propositions could be offered from a service design and construction problem-solving approach to Finnish policymakers that could be used in the next integration policy and program.

### 1.3 Positioning of the study

There is an interference in the different research areas in this research, such as service design and changing management from industrial management science and integration from social and political sciences. This research has interlinked with many integration research areas, especially the fields of social integration, labor market integration, and migration governance-law, policy, and their implementation (see Figure 3).

This is the first study in Finnish integration from an industrial management science perspective; service design is used in this research as a tool for change management, and for addressing "wicked problems" and suggesting solutions to policymakers



**Figure 3.** Positioning of the study

This research has been conducted in a Finnish context; researchers and scholars may interpret the finding of this research as being relevant in comparable situations in other countries receiving similar groups of migrants.

#### 1.4 Description of delimitation

Every study has limitations. Highlighting limits which researcher have faced will introduce a better understanding of results (Powell and Renner 2003).

The first limitation was that questionnaires were collected from a different area of Finland while implementation of VALKO II was studied, and the interviews were carried out in the capital region (Helsinki, Espoo, Vantaa) with different services provided regionally.

From 17 up to 65 years old, newly arrived Arabic-speaking migrants, who can be a PES Office customer, coming from different refugee-exporting countries, were the target group of this study. However, affected by VALKO II was a main criteria for choosing interviewed participants and accepting questionnaire responses. The rationale for this criterion was to avoid a large disparity between individuals who were impacted by VALKO II and those who had resided in Finland for a longer period of time.

Another limitation related to the process of the interview was that no audio-recording was taken. Angel and Hjern (2004) and Abdullah (2017) illustrate how refugees, who come recently from war-torn countries are prone to distrust authorities. Also, they believe, it is normal that many of refugee are likely to be more cautious and to find it difficult to trust the government or those related to the government in some manner such as researchers.

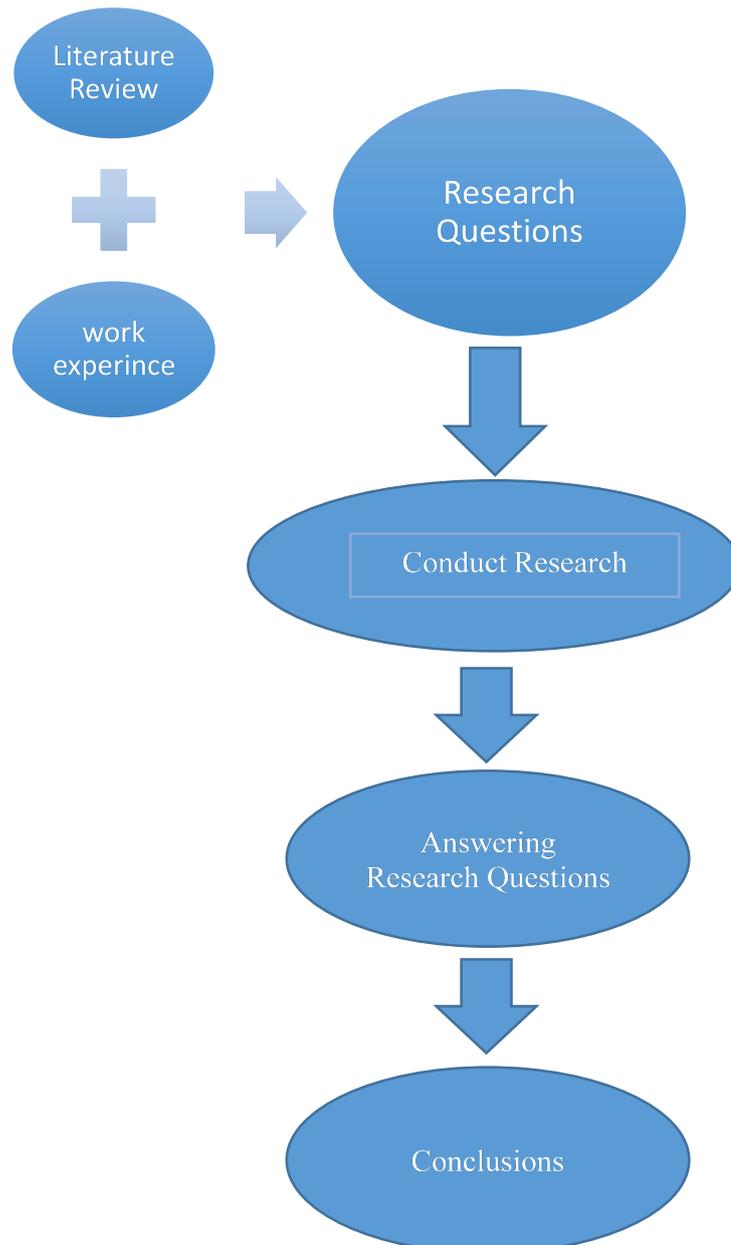
Finally, this study will only focus on discovering reasons why the Finnish integration program didn't work by using service design, and we will not go deeper into integration as a subject.

## 1.5 Research Design

We could define research design as an essential plan that serves to highlight how research will be conducted. According to Mouton (2001:175), the research design attempts to “plan, structure, and execute” the study to boost the “validity of the findings.” This research follows the constructive research methods. The constructive research approach is a time-consuming iterative process (Lukka 2003) that allows the purposeful creation of methodologies, modules, tools, and procedures that are applicable well beyond the case study that inspired them (McGregor 2018).

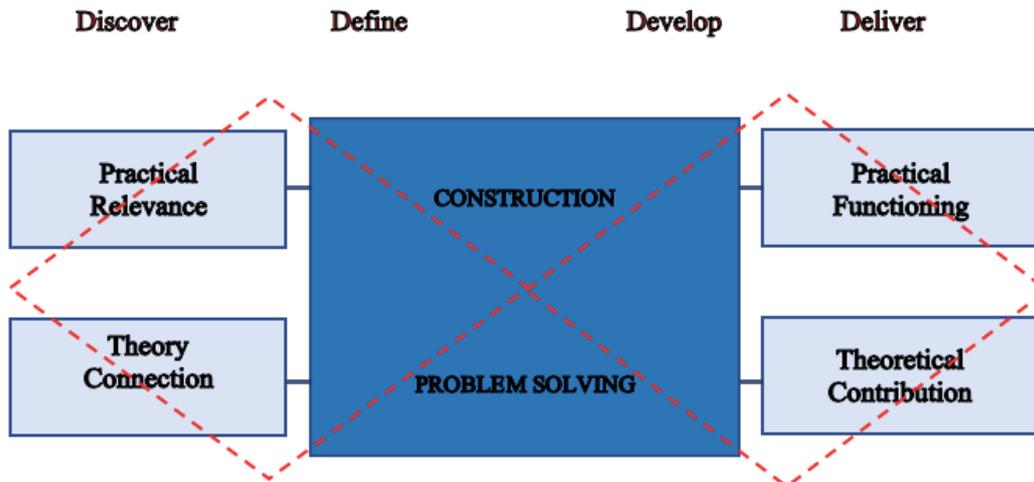
The research process is depicted in Figure 4. An introduction to the research topic is provided as a starting point of the research. This step illustrates the background, motivation, aims, and research questions concerned in industrial management, service design, and integration. The second step entails theoretical study based on the literature review, which includes investigating prior research and related theories. This theoretical work helped me to understand how a service design diamond model could be used with a construction approach for addressing problems. A survey was developed, based on the VALKO II measures, theoretical framework, and work experience for assessing VALKO II measures and generating knowledge of customer's satisfaction and opinions about government policy, VALKO II measures, and the implementation of VALKO II by the Uusimaa Employment and Economic Development Office. This was followed by data collecting and data analysis. Then the service design diamond model was integrated with a construction approach that uses through two phases; in the diagnoses phase, discovering the problem was the starting point, which focused on gathering information, insights, and identifying customers' needs. The second step was defining the problem to identify and analyze problems and to define and create a creative brief. Also in this stage, we held face-to-face interviews for better

understanding the problems from the customers' insights. After problem definition, the specification phase started by my developing solutions through exploring many ways to solve a problem and then delivering the solution step by giving recommendations and providing practical solutions to the Finnish government. In total, this used four steps: discovering and defining problems, then developing and delivering solutions.



**Figure 4.** Research design

The four steps of this integrated model are introduced in Figure 5. Each step informs the researcher about the next one, and the researcher's understanding grows with time. The comparison of empiria and theory is carried out throughout the study period.



**Figure 5.** Conducting research steps

Source: developed by the researcher by integrating a service design diamond model (British Design Council 2015) with a constructive research approach in business science (Kasanen, Lukka and Siitonen 1991).

## 1.6 Dissertation structure

This thesis work will be covered in the following chapters.

**Chapter 1: Introduction.** This chapter introduces the research area and starts with some background about the research. It continues with the research gap, the significance of the study, and research questions and continuously explains the position of this research. Finally, it describes delimitations and the research design and structure.

**Chapter 2: Literature and Theoretical Overview.** This chapter is divided into two parts; the starting point of the first one is some basic definitions. Then it introduces a service design approach and a description of its components. The second part describes the Finnish integration and migration situation, gives some statistical data, and highlights Finnish integration law to focus on VALKO II and its measures.

Chapter 3: Methodology. The starting point of this chapter is about the description of the research method. This chapter describes the questionnaire formation, data collection techniques, and information gathering for this work. It conducts research by using service design as a tool for discovering, defining problems, and developing and delivering solutions. It finishes with some discussions about the reliability and validity of this work.

Chapter 4: Results. This chapter begins by answering the research questions and analyzing the result of the investigation. Accordingly, findings are summarized, and problems found as a result of the investigation are clarified. Recommendations and suggestions for improvement are then described followed by theoretical contributions, political implications, and, finally, future research possibilities.

Chapter 5: Conclusion. This chapter will consist of the conclusion of the whole work.

## 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

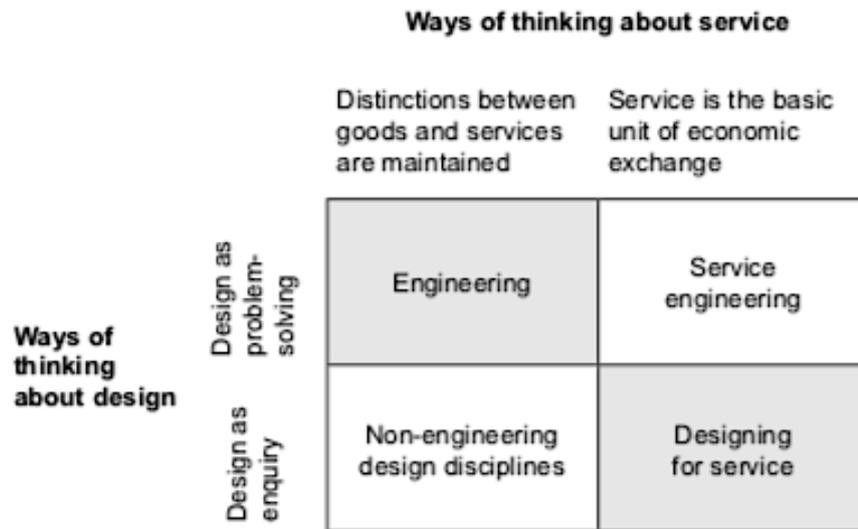
### 2.1 Service design

#### 2.1.1 Service design definition

The literature offers many explanations of service design. Service design can be defined, for example, as “Service design helps to innovate (create new) or improve (existing) services to make them more useful, usable, and desirable for clients and effective for organizations. It is a new, holistic, multi-disciplinary, and integrative field” (Moritz 2005:6), and as “An interdisciplinary approach that combines different methods and tools from various disciplines” (Stickdorn and Shneider 2011:29).

According to Thoelen et al., (2015:7) “Service design is a method for inventing or improving services. It is an interdisciplinary method that, just like product design, makes use of design thinking. Service design helps with redesigning services from the perspective of the user not by guessing what these users might want, but by truly co-creating relevant, effective, and efficient services in collaboration with them.”

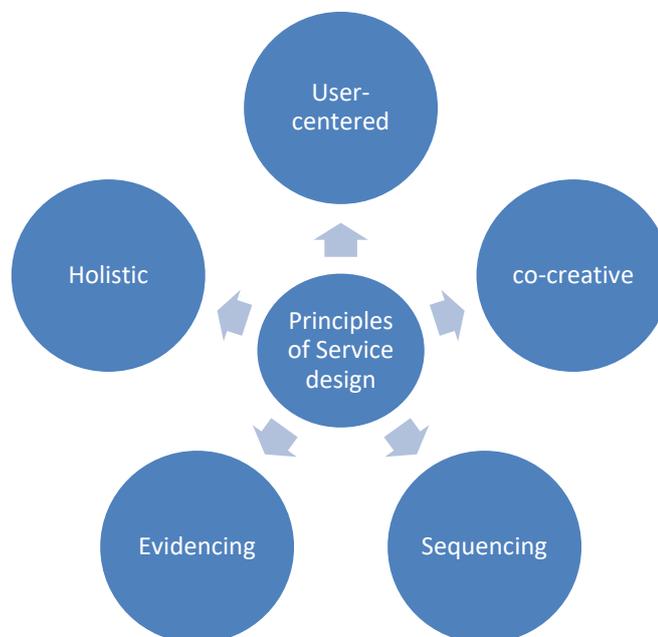
In conceptualizing service design, there are two important ways of thinking about service design. The first is the distinction between viewing design as a problem-solving exercise aimed at realizing what has previously been imagined and viewing it as an exploratory enquiry in creating knowledge about what is being designed while including end-users and others in the process. The second one is whether the distinction between service and goods is important, or whether service is best viewed as a basic activity involving numerous players within a value chain (Kimbell 2011). Figure 6 summarizes these perspectives.



**Figure 6.** Approaches to conceptualizing service design (Kimbell 2011)

### 2.1.2 Principles of service design

Service design has five key principles: user-centered, co-creative, sequencing, evidencing, and holistic (Thoelen et al. 2015) see figure 7.

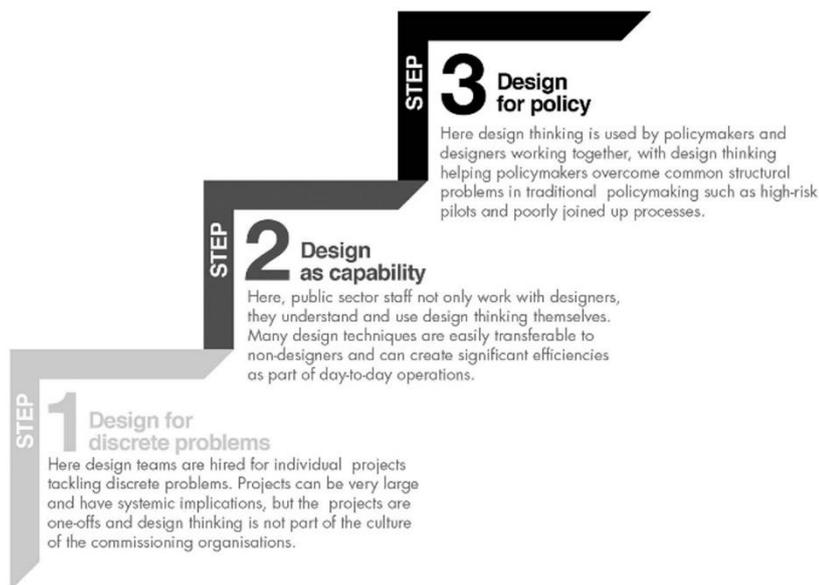


**Figure 7.** Principles of service design (Thoelen et al. 2015)

### 2.1.3 Service design and wicked problems

According to Woodham and Thomson (2017: 237), “Service design strategies are seen to be successfully shaping new approaches and providing possible solutions to often intractable or “wicked” problems.” Rittel and Webber (1973) also believe that service design thinking is an effective method for solving difficult issues. Brown and Katz (2011) praise design thinking's ability to create revolutionary change and tackle complicated societal problems.

Overwhelmingly, the solution's target consumers are ignored during planning and conducting socioeconomic development programs. As a result, unsuccessful solutions disparage social factors, such as the importance of family or cultural differences. Also, most of the developers have socio-economic and cultural differences from consumers. So, it is important to ensure that the program satisfies user requirements by using human-centered design methods (Vechakul 2016). Also, Vuontisjärvi (2015:24) shed light on the importance of the role of design in “the public sector’s changing service culture by concretizing development and supporting commitment to new practices.” Figure 8 illustrates the public sector design ladder.



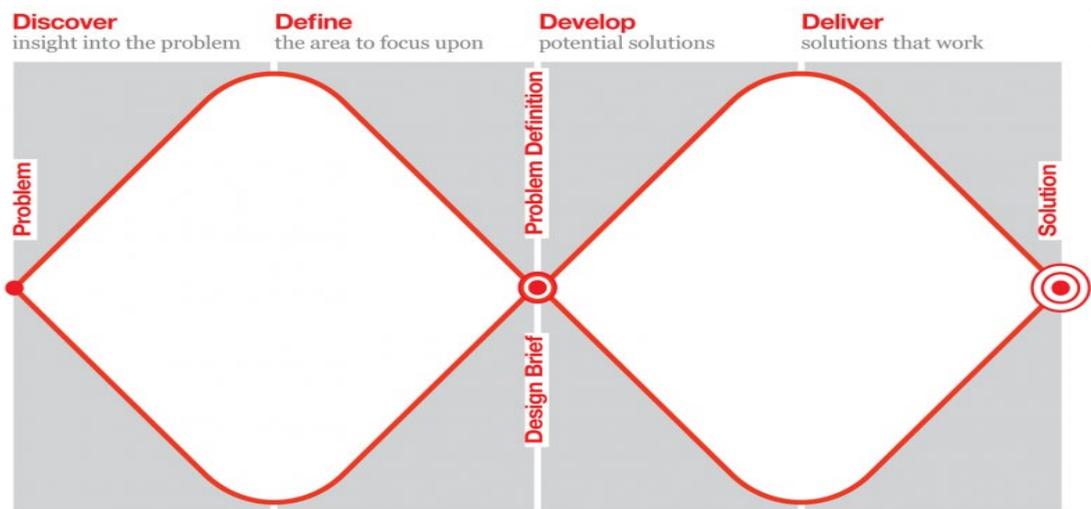
**Figure 8.** Public sector design ladder (SEE platform 2013)

#### 2.1.4 Service design process

Developing innovative solutions is the main goal of the service design process for challenges that a business may face (Tuulaniemi 2011). Briefly, the design process has two phases: problem identifying and solution finding (Vechakul 2016).

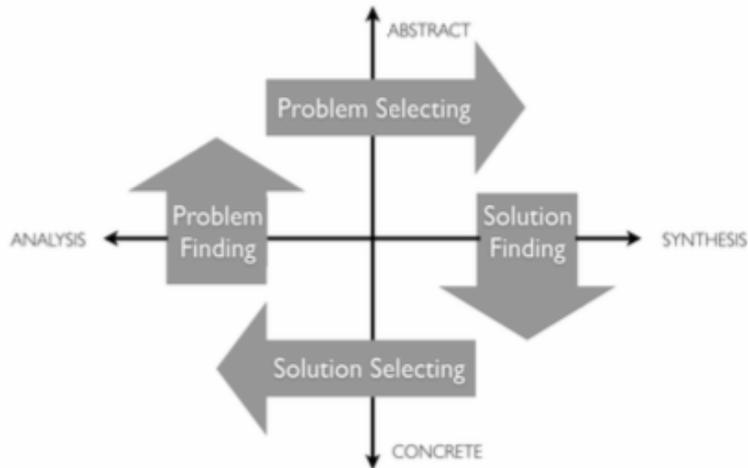
The British Design Council (2005) introduced a double diamond model as a process for designing that is based on “discover, define, develop, and deliver.” as Figure 9 shows:

- Discover. The first diamond helps people understand, rather than simply assume, what the problem is. It involves speaking to and spending time with people who are affected by the issues.
- Define. The insight gathered from the discovery phase can help one to define the challenge in a different way.
- Develop. The second diamond encourages people to give different answers to the clearly defined problem, seeking inspiration from elsewhere and co-designing with a range of different people.
- Deliver. Delivery involves testing out different solutions on a small-scale, rejecting those that will not work and improving the ones that will. (British Design Council 2021).



**Figure 9.** Service Design double diamond model (British Design Council 2015)

Design processes have two basic phases, first one analytic for discovering the problem and a second one synthetic for providing solutions (Owen 2001), even it is presented as having many steps or different names or even if it is depicted as a linear and circular series, etc. (Eisenbart, Blessing and Gericke 2012; Roschuni 2012).



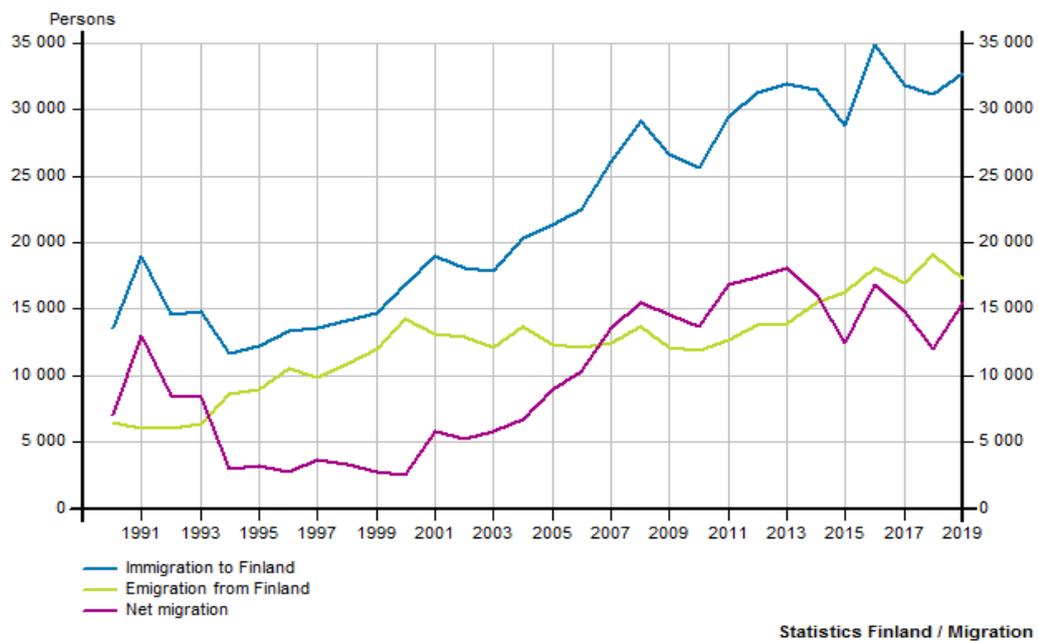
**Figure 10.** The design process can be represented as problem finding, problem selecting, solution finding, and solution selecting. (Adapted from Beckman and Barry 2007:44)

Vechakul (2016) simplified the design process definition as movement from the concrete realm to the abstract realm and then back to the concrete during the journey of finding problems and finding solutions, see Figure 10.

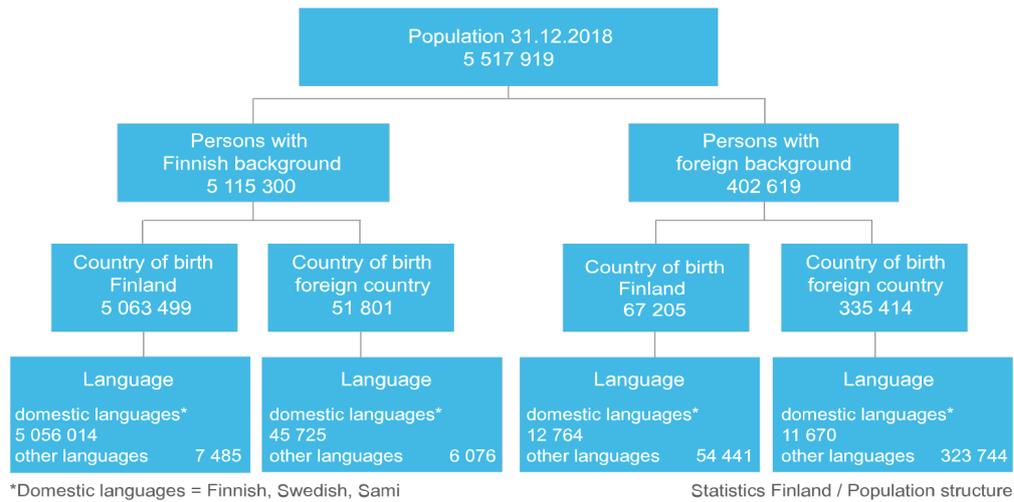
## 2.2 Finnish integration and migration situation

### 2.2.1 General overview

Recently, Finland has become an immigration destination as other Western European countries and increasing refugee figures made Finland a net immigration winner like the rest of the other Nordic countries (Saukkonen 2016). Figure 11 illustrates net immigration situation in Finland between 1990-2019 and how starting from 1990s immigration increased. In 2018, the proportion of persons of foreign backgrounds composed 7% of the population of Finland (Finland Statistics 2020). Also, Figure 12 illustrates the Finnish population by origin, country of birth, and language in 2018. In conclusion, immigration as a phenomenon is fairly new in Finland, and immigrants are increasing every year.

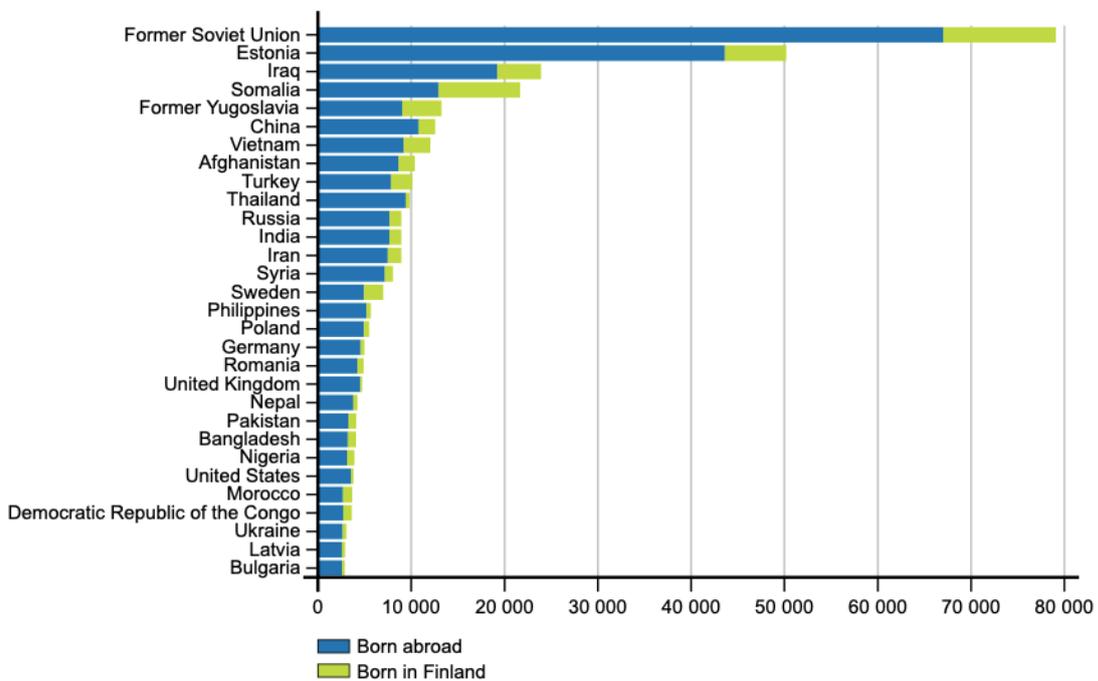


**Figure 11.** Immigration, emigration, and net migration by country dep./arrival 1990–2019. (Statistics Finland/Migration)



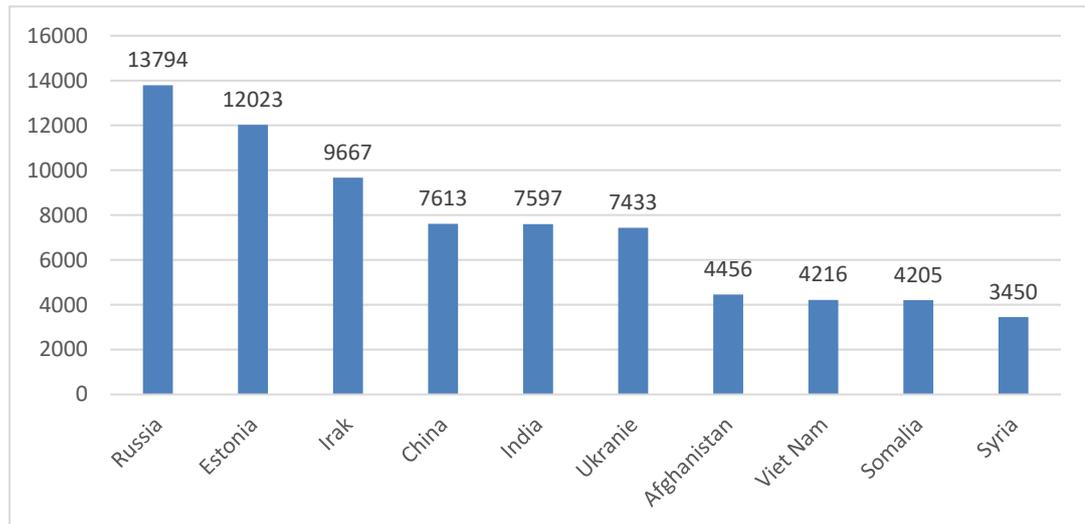
**Figure 12.** Population by origin, country of birth, and language in 2018 (Statistics Finland/Migration)

Figure 13 shows immigrants come from a wide range of nations. The main groups of immigrants in Finland are coming from the former Soviet Union, Estonia, Iraq, Somalia, former Yugoslavia, China, Vietnam, Afghanistan, Turkey, Thailand, Russia, India, Iran, and Syria. The Estonians, most of the Russians, Chinese, Indians, and Thai are labeled “voluntary immigrants,” whereas most of the Iraqis, Somalis, Syrians, and Afghans are coming to Finland as “refugees.”



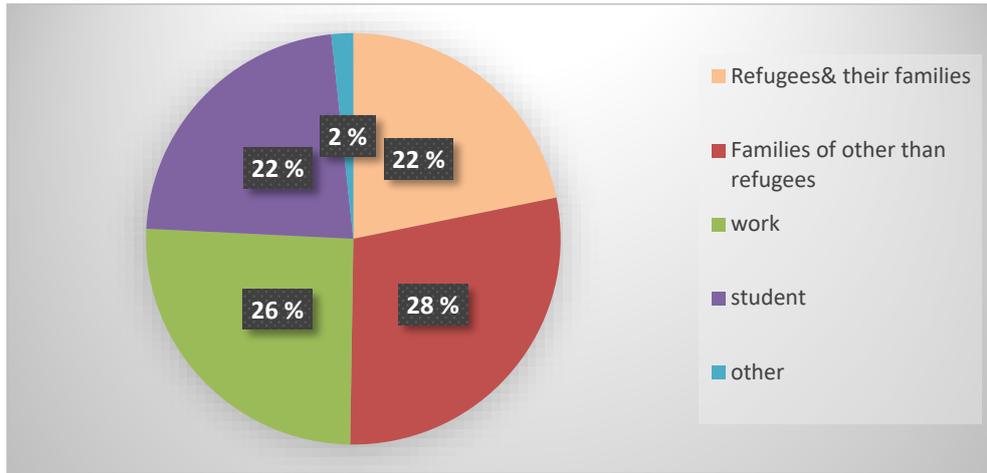
**Figure 13.** Biggest background country groups of persons with foreign backgrounds in 2019. (Statistics Finland/Migration)

From 1.2015-3.2019, the main new immigrants to Finland are coming from Russia, Estonia, Iraq, China, India, Ukraine, Afghanistan, Viet Nam, Somalia, and Syria as Figure 14 shows.

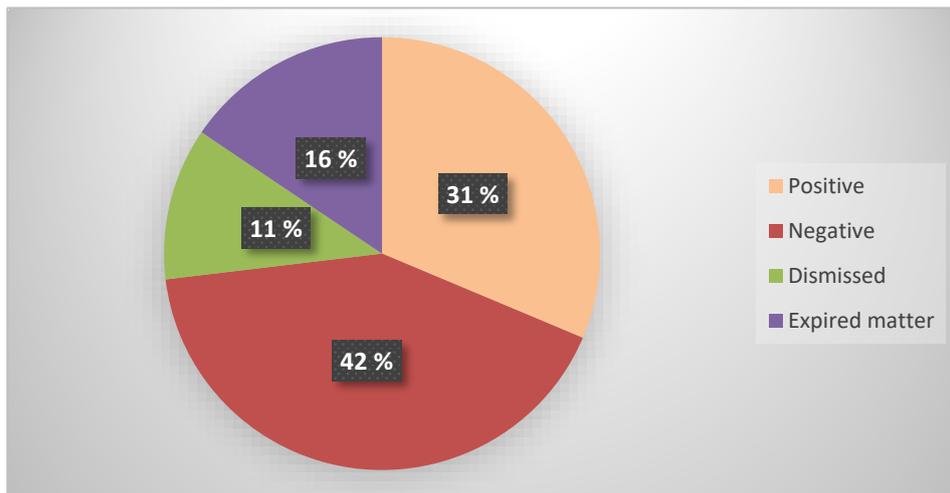


**Figure 14.** Main newcomers to Finland between Jan.2015-March.2019.  
(Finnish immigration services/ statistics)

The Finnish population has a diverse group of immigrants. Migrants come to Finland for a variety of reasons. The most prevalent ones involve family ties other than refugees, work, study, and being refugees. So, if we compare the number of first residence permits granted to refugees and their families to the total number of first residence permits granted to immigrants, we will find that's just 22% of the total first residence permits that were granted between 2015–2018 were for refugees and their families (see Figure 15). Even at that number, Finnish media was filled with the stories of refugees (Sarvimäki 2017), and highlighted immigration's problems, threats, and challenges (Kurki 2018).



**Figure 15.** Distribution of first residence permit granted immigrants in Finland from 1.2015 to 12.2018. (Data from the Finnish Immigration Services edited by the researcher)



**Figure 16.** Distribution of asylum decisions between 1.2015 and 12.2018 in Finland (Finnish Migration Service/Statistics)

In December 2015, the Finnish Government announced an action plan of asylum policy for halting asylum seekers' flood by tightening the criteria for granting residence permits to asylum seekers. So, a residence permit on the basis of humanitarian protection has been abolished, and the assessments of the security situation in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Somalia, have been updated, in other words, the Finnish immigration service indicates that these countries are now considered safe (Saukkonen 2016). Resulting from this new policy, even the number of asylum applications between January 2015 and December 2018 is high, but that does not mean all asylum seekers will get a residence permit. The positive decisions on international protection as well as decisions on residence permits for asylum

seekers is 16,143, so just 31% of asylum seekers have been granted a residence permit, see Figure 16.

### 2.2.2 Integration

Integration is to create a “society for all” where all different kinds of people equal in rights and responsibilities as stated in the World Summit for Social Development (1995).

Integration, as declared in the European Immigrant Integration Policy (2004:19), is a dynamic, long-term, and continuous two-way process of mutual accommodation not a static outcome. It demands the participation not only of immigrants and their descendants but also of every resident. The integration process involves adaptation by immigrants, both men and women, who all have rights and responsibilities in relation to their new country of residence. It also involves the receiving society, which should create opportunities for the immigrants' full economic, social, cultural, and political participation.

In Finland, the definition of integration stated in the Act on the Promotion of Immigrant Integration (1386/2010) as:

- 1) integration means interactive development involving immigrants and society at large, the aim of which is to provide immigrants with the knowledge and skills required in society and working life and to provide them with support, so that they can maintain their culture and language;*
- 2) integration also means the multi-sectoral promotion and support of integration referred to in paragraph 1 using the measures and services provided by the authorities and other parties.*

### 2.2.3 Finnish integration laws

The integration law was founded in May 1999. The goal of the Act on the Integration of Immigrants and Reception of Asylum Seekers (FMI 1999)

*is promote the integration, equality and freedom of choice of immigrants through measures which help them to acquire the essential knowledge and skills they need to function in society, and to ensure support and care for asylum seekers and beneficiaries of temporary protection in the context of a mass influx by arranging for their reception.*

The Act on the Promotion of Immigrant Integration came into force in 2011, aiming to enhance integration and facilitating immigrants' active participation in Finnish society. Another goal is to improve gender equality, non-discrimination, and positive interaction between different population groups (FMEE 2010).

The Integration Act presents the duties and responsibilities of the different actors in the integration system at national, regional, and local levels.

According with section 34 of the Act on the Promotion of Immigrant Integration Finnish government decides to promote integration at the national level by comprising integration objectives for four years as a government integration program (1386/2010; the Immigrant Integration Act). In 2012, the first Government Integration Program (VALKO I) was published, which contains the cross-administrative policy package for improving immigrant integration and good ethnic relations (FMEE 2016a).

The second Government Integration Program for 2016–2019 (VALKO II) was prepared by the Ministerial Working Group on Migration and based on Prime Minister Sipilä's strategic Government Program (FMEE 2016a).

VALKO II is based on four focus areas (FMEE 2016a):

1. *Using immigrants' cultural strengths to enhance Finnish innovation capacity.*
2. *Enhancing integration through cross-sectoral measures.*
3. *Increasing cooperation between the state and municipalities in the reception of beneficiaries of international protection.*
4. *Promoting a humane national discussion culture that will not tolerate racism.*

#### 2.2.4 Indicators of immigrant integration

There are many indicators for measuring immigrant integration; the most important indicators are Zaragoza's indicators and, Ager and Strang's indicators.

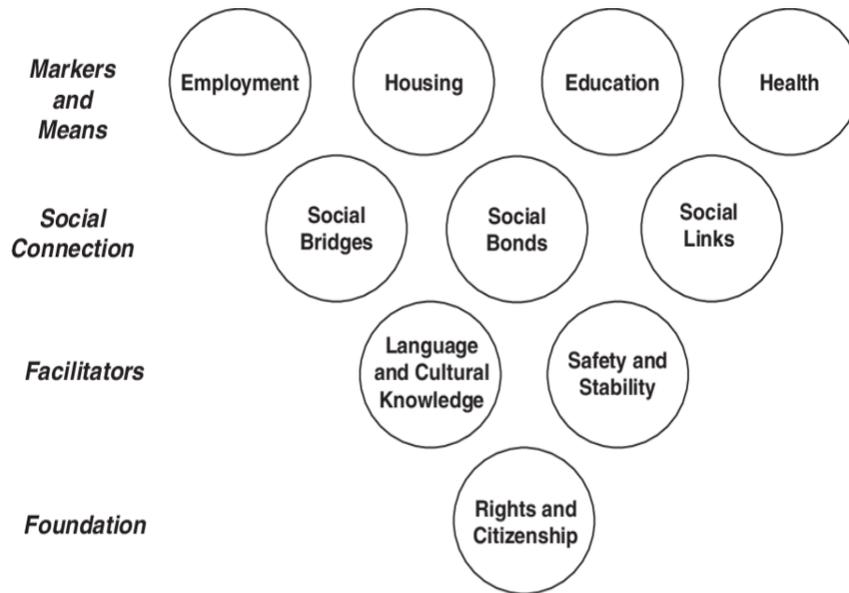
- Zaragoza indicators of integration: Aiming to support the monitoring of the outcome of integration policies and the situation of immigrants, the common indicators of migrant integration have been introduced in the following areas: employment, education, social inclusion, and active citizenship (see Table 1).

**Table 1.** Indicators of immigrant integration

<b>Policy area</b>	<b>Indicators</b>
Employment	Core indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• employment rate</li> <li>• unemployment rate</li> <li>• activity rate</li> </ul>
Education	Core indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• highest educational attainment (share of population with tertiary, secondary and primary or less than primary education)</li> <li>• share of low-achieving 15-year-olds in reading, mathematics and science</li> <li>• share of 30–34-year-olds with tertiary educational attainment</li> <li>• share of early leavers from education and training</li> </ul>
Social inclusion	Core indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• median net income – the median net income of the immigrant population as a proportion of the median net income of the total population</li> <li>• at risk of poverty rate – share of population with net disposable income of less than 60 per cent of national median</li> <li>• the share of population perceiving their health status as good or poor</li> <li>• ratio of property owners to non-property owners among immigrants and the total population</li> </ul>
Active citizenship <sup>2</sup>	Core indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the share of immigrants that have acquired citizenship</li> <li>• the share of immigrants holding permanent or long-term residence permits</li> <li>• the share of immigrants among elected representatives</li> </ul>

Source: Zaragoza Declaration

-The indicators of integration framework depending on Ager and Strang 2008:



**Figure 17.** The indicators integration framework depending on Ager and Strang (Ager and Strang 2008)

Figure 17 illustrates integration indicators depending on Ager and Strang (2004). The indicators in the integration framework divided indicators into four groups. The first one is “means, and markers”, which includes four indicators (employment, housing, education, health) which are important aspects of participation that demonstrate evidence of the achievement of things that are valued within the community and are a means to a goal that is significant to integration. The second one is “social connections” which indicates to many social ties that assist toward integration. The third one is “facilitators” which refers to language and culture knowledge, and conditions that help people to feel safe and active in their communities. The fourth one is “foundation” and refers to concepts that define an individual's responsibilities toward society and its members and vice versa.

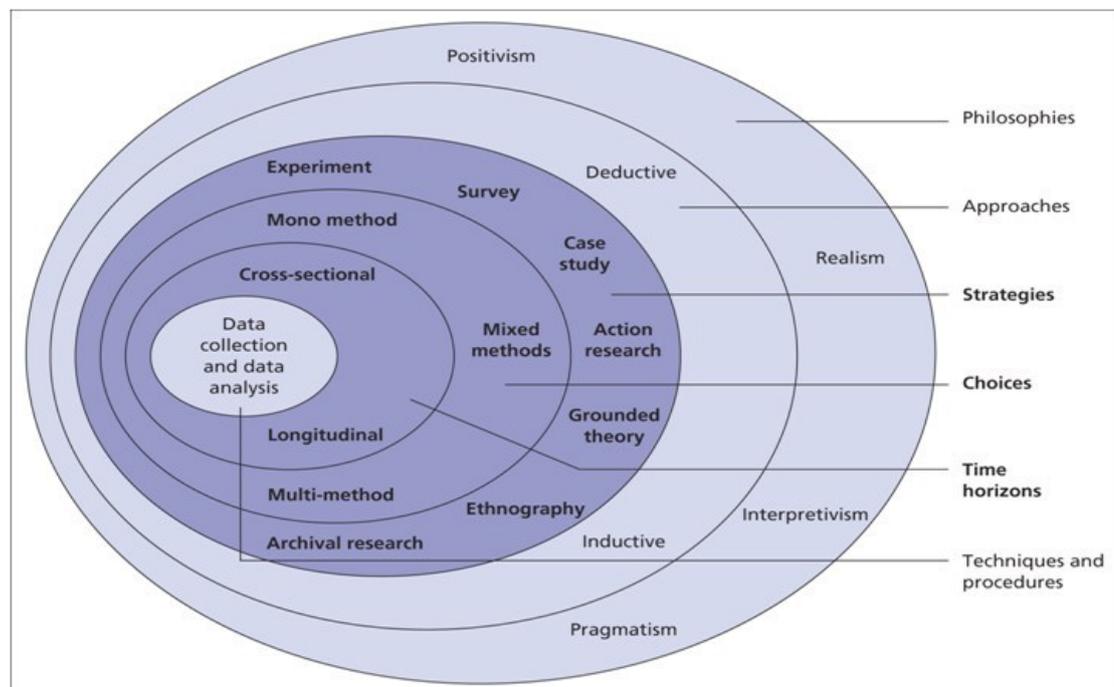
### 3 METHODOLOGY

This chapter outlines the philosophical perspectives that underpin the research strategies, approach, and research methods as well as the research's reliability and validity.

#### 3.1 Research paradigm, philosophies, approach, and methods

Every research design may gain important and unrivaled contributions to business and management research by introducing a special and different manner of understanding organizational facts (Morgan 1986; Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2009; Ha-Vikström 2018).

In terms of developing my philosophy and designing this research, several research designs have been investigated to adopt “the best” design. The research onion model, which was introduced by Saunders et al. (2007), is one of the most famous models for understanding the research's different types. The research onion symbolically depicts the various aspects of the research that might be adapted in order to build, step by step, one's own research design. (Ha-Vikström 2018), as illustrated in Figure 18.



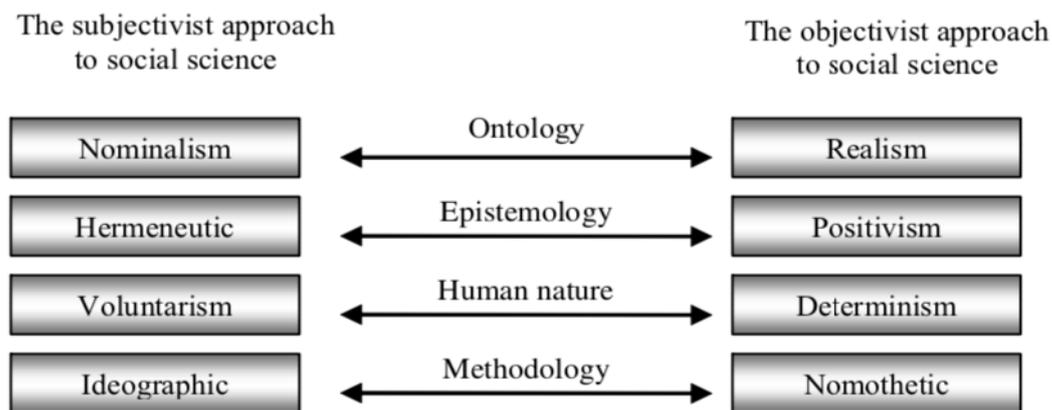
**Figure 18.** Research onion model (Saunders et al. 2009)

### 3.1.1 Research paradigm

Research paradigms are common frameworks or beliefs supported by theories and sets of fundamental assumptions and are a guide for a researcher based on practices in addressing, understanding, and exploring the research problems (Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2011; Jonker and Pennink 2010). A paradigm as defined by Bassey (1990:41) is

*a network of coherent ideas about the nature of the world and the functions of researchers which, adhered to by a group of researchers, conditions the patterns of their thinking and underpins their research actions.*

Mainly, a paradigm means distinct approaches to research, making it difficult for representatives of opposing paradigms to comprehend, communicate, or critique research findings. Also, a scientific paradigm can be identified methodologically as a world view, a broad perspective, and ontologically as a technique of breaking down the complexities of reality and the nature of reality (Patton 1990; Guba and Lincoln 1994); epistemologically a paradigm determines the way of acquiring new knowledge by a researcher and hence instructs the selection of paradigm-compliant methods (Vafidis 2002; Guba and Lincoln 1994). In the social and behavioral sciences, the term "paradigm" is widely employed (Saunders et al. 2009). Also, the importance of human nature is stressed by Burrell and Morgan (1979), particularly when it comes to social sciences like industrial management see Figure 19.

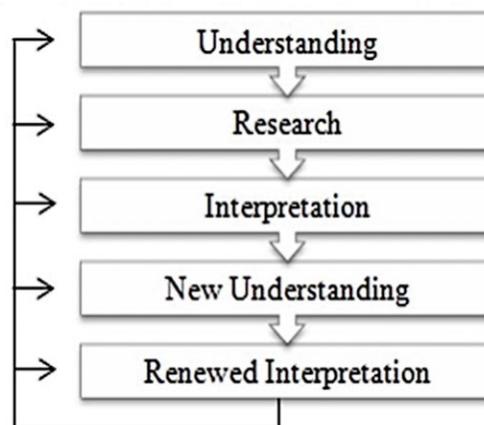


**Figure 19.** The subjective-objective dimension (Burrell and Morgan 1979)

Academic research relies mainly on two science paradigms: hermeneutics and positivism (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Lowe 2002). Despite the fact that they have the same belief about owing science its roots to empiricism, they differ in dealing with scientific knowledge, how scientific research is conducted, and how gaining conclusions (Niiniluoto 1984).

In most cases, positivism is associated with natural sciences and is understood as a way to investigate huge amounts of data and explain the regularities and laws that steer the phenomena. Hermeneutics, on the other hand, is associated with humans, who's interest is to understand the investigated phenomena itself (Niiniluoto 1984; Olkkonen 1993; Arbnor and Bjerke 1997; Iskanius 2006).

Figure 20 explains how in the hermeneutics could acquiring knowledge, by moving from understanding to research, to interpretation, then from interpretation to new understanding, to renewed interpretation, and so on by starting over with understanding (Hvilsom 2012).



**Figure 20.** Hermeneutic Circle of Understanding (Hvilsom 2012)

### 3.1.2 Research approaches and strategies

We can find the research approach in the second layer of the research onion (see Figure 18). It is involved in how to gain knowledge or how to use theories (Saunders et al. 2007; Ritchie et al. 2013). There are three approaches to develop theory: deductive (often quantitative), or inductive (qualitative), or abductive approaches (Saunders et al. 2009).

In simple words, if a scholar starts research with a theory, often developed from his academic literature reading, and he designs a research strategy for testing the theory, then he is using a deductive approach. Conversely, if a scholar starts

research by collecting data for exploring a phenomenon and he generates or builds a theory (often in the form of a conceptual framework), then he is using an inductive approach. Last, if a scholar collects data for exploring a phenomenon, identifying themes, and explaining patterns to generate a new or modify an existing theory which he thereafter tests through additional data collection, then he is using an abductive approach (Saunders et al. 2019).

Also, in the literature, there are different kinds of classifications for research approaches. In Finnish research on Industrial Engineering and Management, two types of an empirical research approaches have been predominantly employed (Iskanius 2006).

The first approach, according to Nelimio and Näsi (1980) and later modified by Kasanen, Lukka, and Siitonen (1991), is a model for business research in a two-dimensional framework: theoretic-empirical and descriptive-normative. In this framework, the conceptual analytical categories, building a concept system based on the earlier research and literature, and analyzing them reasonably (Olkkonen 1993), and nomothetic (the research explains the causalities positivistically), decision-orientated creates methods for solving problems logically (Neilimo and Näsi 1980; Kasanen et al. 1993), action-orientated approach focuses on understanding the system (Neilimo and Näsi 1980), and the constructive research approach is a solving-problem approach and creates an innovative approach, verifies the solution practically and makes an effort to generalize it (Kasanen et al. 1993). See Figure 21.

	Theoretical	Empirical
Descriptive	Conceptual analytical approach	Nomotetical approach  Operation analytical approach
Normative	Decision-methodological approach	Constructive approach

**Figure 21.** Research Approaches in the categories of business research (according to Neilimo and Näsi 1980; Näsi and Saarikorpi 1983; Kasanen et al. 1991)

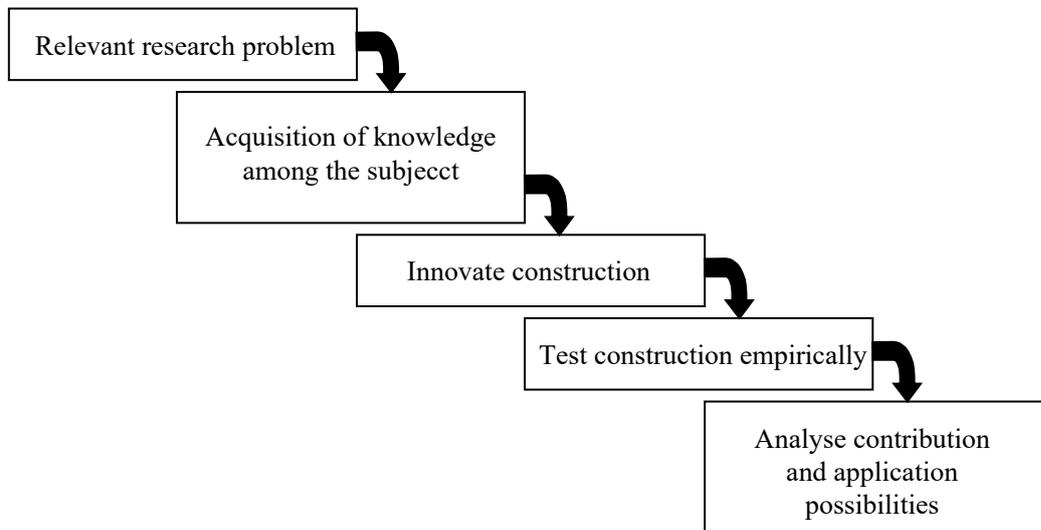
At the beginning of the 1990s, a constructive research approach was developed in the field of economic science (Kasanen et al. 1991). Even in philosophy, the world

is constructed step-by-step from supposedly basic elements by using constructive research (Kasanen et al. 1991, 1993). Also, it's worth noting that a constructive strategy creates broad generalizations based on a thorough and in-depth understanding (Peura 2013). According to Takala and Helo (2000)

*A constructive research approach is a methodology that aims to solve real-life problems with innovative constructions and contemporarily provide contributions to a field of science.*

Lukka (2002) and Oyegoke (2011) illustrate the constructive research processes, Figure 22 shows normal progress of the constructive research process as introduced by Lukka (2002), Oyegoke also postulates there are six phases when applying a constructive research approach as he mentions in his demonstrative example:

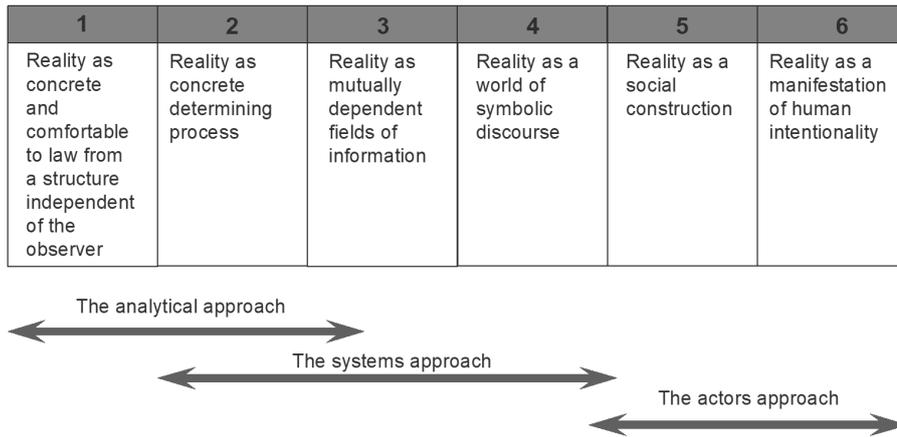
- Finding a practical relevant problem that is acknowledged as necessary to be solved.
- Acquiring a general knowledge of the subject.
- Providing an innovative construction.
- Ensuring functionality of the new construction (solution).
- Showing the research contribution of the solution concept connected to the existing theoretical knowledge.
- Examining the solution's application possibilities One characteristic of constructive research is empirical intervention, which on the researcher's side is explicit and intense. This is opposite to the normal clinical approach to research.

*A Typical Constructive Research Process*

**Figure 22.** Normal Progress of Constructive Research Process (Lukka 2002)

From an academic point of view, constructive research, as a methodology for generating new knowledge must contribute to an existing theoretical base. The researcher must be able to derive new knowledge from the study. It can happen either as a totally new extension to an existing body of knowledge in a form of the developed construction or as a revelation of interactions behind the new construction (Lukka 2002).

The second one, see Figure 23, is illustrated by Arbnor and Bjerke (1997) and Iskanius (2006), who proposed three methodological approaches the analytical, the systems approach and the actors' approach. With the assumption that reality is objective, the analytical approach reflects (positivist perspective) explanatory knowledge. With the assumption that reality is objectively accessible, the systems approach sits between positivism and hermeneutics. With the assumption that reality is socially created, the actors' approach reflects (hermeneutic perspective) comprehension knowledge.



**Figure 23.** The three methodological approaches (Arbnor and Bjerke 1997)

### 3.1.3 Research methods

There are three approaches to methodology qualitative, quantitative, and mixed as scientists agree (Bryman 2008; Cronholm and Hjalmarsson 2011).

Timilsina (2017) provided a simple comparison between qualitative, quantitative, and mixed approaches in his research, which is shown in Table 2. There has been a trend recently in academic research to create a mixed-method approach by integrating qualitative and quantitative research for conducting as a third research method in social science (Creswell 2003; Hall 2013).

Mixed methods, as Vedanthachari (2007) argued, is the current strategy for tackling real-world issues in academic research. Many researchers, such as Denzin (1978), Jick (1979), and Greener (2008), tend to talk about mixed research advantages for solving a research problem, and others like Robey (1996) and Mark, Feller and Button (1997) stress about the ability of mixed research studies to withstand opposition, as it uses more than one methodology for data collection, which allows examining the research problem from multiple perspectives, while Johnson et al. (2007) mention about the effectiveness of using mixed methods for depth of understanding and broad breadth.

For the fourth stage as presented in the research onion, the time horizon which can be either longitudinal or cross-sectional. Gathering and analyzing data is the last stage in the research onion as illustrated in Figure 18.

**Table 2.** Comparative analysis of qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods (Timilsina 2017)

Measures	Qualitative	Mixed Method	Quantitative
Definitions	A method of inquiry where a researcher tries to explore the reasoning, opinions and understanding of the target research sample towards a particular phenomenon or behaviour through non-numerical data.	A method of inquiry where a researcher tries to understand the facts about a social phenomenon by integrating the characteristics (data, methods, methodologies, research paradigms, and interpretations) of both qualitative and quantitative research methods in a single study or a set of related studies.	A method of inquiry where a researcher tries to explain the cause and effect relationship between variables through numeric data.
Research objectives	Theory building, description, exploration, and discovery.	Multiple objectives: Theory building and testing.	Theory testing, description, explanation, and prediction.
Scientific approach	Inductive or "bottom-up". Generate new hypotheses and theories for further analysis.	Deductive and inductive. Both theory building and testing is possible.	Deductive or "top-down". Test hypotheses and theories through data analysis.
Philosophical assumptions	Positivism, post-positivism, constructivism, and critical theory.	Pragmatic assumptions following the characteristics (research philosophies) of both qualitative and quantitative methods.	Positivism and post-positivism.
Nature and source of data	Qualitative data gained mainly through unstructured interviews, focus groups, case studies, participant observations (words, images, themes, and categories), open-ended surveys, etc. Data are mainly of a qualitative nature.	Closed-ended measures, open-ended observations. Mixture of numeric variables, words, images, and interpretations. Data are mixed (qualitative and quantitative) in nature.	Quantitative data gained mainly through closed-ended surveys, experiments, case studies, structured interviews, an already existing dataset, etc. Data are mainly numerical variables.
Data analysis method	Text, image and theme analysis.	A mixture of text, images, theme and statistical analysis.	Statistical analysis.
Reliability and validity	Reliability: Consistency of results and findings. Validity: Appropriateness of research tools, process and data in answering the research question.	Reliability and validity of the study can be established through inference quality, i.e., logically justified conclusions following an appropriate scientific approach (deductive, inductive or abductive) and data quality, i.e., the trustworthiness of collected data, how it has been collected, what is the source of the data, and so on.	Reliability: Test-retest (a different test should produce similar results) and internal consistency (measured through reliability score, i.e., Chronbach's alpha). Validity: Content validity (pre-testing of measures, expert opinion, previous studies) and construct validity (measured in terms of convergent and discriminant through correlation coefficient).
Results, findings, and reporting	Qualitative studies follow a narrative approach in presenting results and findings, which needs to be supported with contextual description, categories, themes, and respondent statements. This means that the results and findings are respondent-centred.	Mixed method research follows practices from both qualitative and quantitative studies. Here, the inclination of a researcher lies in statistical findings supported with in-depth narrative description and the identification of overall themes. This means that both narrative and descriptive approaches are valued equally in presenting results and findings.	Quantitative studies follow a descriptive approach in presenting results and findings, which needs to be supported by numerical values in terms of correlations, mean, median, and modes. Here, statistically significant results and findings are valued more; this means that the results and findings are researcher-centred.

### 3.1.4 Reasoning of this study

According to Iskanius (2006:49)

*The suitable research paradigm for the study depends to some extent on the nature of the problem and on the context in which the study is conducted*

The main goal of this research is to solve the problem stated: “Why didn’t the Finnish government integration program work?”

Hermeneutic is the research philosophy which was used in this study. This study was conducted while the government was trying to make efficiency improvements in the integration process in cross-ministerial collaboration to provide integration services for customers. In this study for solving the problem, broad and deep information is needed through looking at the change process over time, to adjust to new ideas and issues as they elicit, and to contribute to the new theories evaluation that the hermeneutic paradigm can do (Easterby-Smith et al. 2002).

This study mainly focuses on the reasons for the ineffectiveness of VALKO II and customer satisfaction perspective, using the double diamond, a service design process model with a broader research area than previous earlier research. The study also attempts to discover if there is a possibility to find solutions that promote integration and achieve customer satisfaction and that can be presented to decision makers and thus improve the government program performance. Because of this target setting and research strategy, our research could be considered constructive research. Especially, it is unknown that constructive research is a research technique for producing constructions and is a form of applied study that follows technical rules because of its philosophical character (Niiniluoto 1985). A construction is not a model that can be verified by the evidence gathered and used to produce research outcomes. Despite the fact that this research employed a constructive research method, it was used inside the hermeneutical cycles to develop constructs to answer practical issues. In most cases, a hypothesis is replaced by a construction, and vice versa (Kasanen et al. 1991). This dissertation's logical framework is precisely the same as this.

Mixed-method research, according to the literature, yields a greater grasp of the study problem than qualitative or quantitative approaches alone. Timilsina (2017) highlights in his research about the suitability of mixed-method research when there is need for understanding interrelated phenomena to investigate more than an analytic concern; the study is multi-phase like investigating phenomena from various perspectives; different but complementary data is required in order to

answer the research question. This means enhancing the reliability and validity of the study will be done by incorporating mixed-method research in a study. Based on this discussion it is not only a better fit for the philosophical stance of this dissertation to use a mixed-method approach but also a better fit for the applied nature of the social issue (Timilsina 2017). Also using mixed methods came in response to filling the methodological gap and in response to research findings of Pyrhönen et al (2017) in which Nordic experts echoed in their interviews the importance of combining qualitative and quantitative methods in integration research field.

To summarize (see Table 3), the research philosophy in this study is hermeneutics; an abductive approach with a constructive research strategy is adopted for gathering scientific knowledge. The research methodology is a mixed method that incorporates both qualitative and quantitative research methods. The use of both web-based questionnaires and face-to-face interviews helps to improve the data and findings. Cross-sectional is the time horizon set for this study, comprising the investigation and analysis of data collection from several integration studies conducted in different countries over same period of time.

**Table 3.** Summary of Research model for this study

<b>Research model of the study</b>	
Research philosophy	Hermeneutics
Research approach	Abductive
Strategy	constructive research
Methodical choice	Mixed method
Time horizon	Cross-sectional
Techniques and procedures	Web-based questionnaires/Online data collection/face-to-face interviews

Table created by Zafar (2019) modified to be suitable for this study by the researcher

### 3.2 Reliability and validity of the study

The sources of research trustworthiness are reliability and validity. The term "reliability" here might relate to the consistency and correctness of the research

findings and outcomes (Yin 2009). Yin (1989) underlines that reliability goal is “*to minimize the errors and biases in a study.*”

In quantitative research, the stability of the measures implemented in research or their internal consistency is most frequently referred to as reliability. According to Goode et al. (1952) and Yin (1989) establishing reliability in research could be done by proving that repetition of the study processes will not affect conclusions and outcomes (Goode et al. 1952; Yin 1989). Burns (1999:21) emphasizes that “Would the same results be obtained by other researchers using the same analysis?” Peterson and Kim (2013) and Cortina (1993) asserts that in the social sciences, the Cronbach's alpha is the most widely used evaluator of scale reliability.

Depending on Nunnally (1978), the range of Cronbach's alpha is from 0 to 1; the greater the reliability of the scale or survey data collection method, the greater the value of Cronbach's alpha. An acceptable reliability coefficient usually is 0.7. The following rules of thumb as presented by George and Mallery (2003): “\_ > .9 – Excellent, \_ > .8 – Good, \_ > .7 – Acceptable, \_ > .6 – Questionable, \_ > .5 – Poor, and \_ < .5 – Unacceptable”. SPSS 24 was used to measure Cronbach's alpha, and the value of Cronbach's alpha for this study was 0.828.

In a qualitative approach, Wheeler and Carter (2009) indicate that reliability is improved when research tools are administered by one researcher to all the respondents. In this research, tools are administered by one researcher. For data collection, we used the face-to-face interview method. We wanted to hear what participants said about what they recently experienced in Finland and how they reacted to the Finnish integration program and measures. Because this kind of interaction is important “to get at deeper meanings” (Patton 2002:49), in the present study this means to reach deeper thoughts of the participants and perspectives about how they, through their Finnish integration program experiences, integrate into Finnish society and construct their new life in Finland. The goal of interviewing is to get insight into another person's perspective, and he indicates that we interview to collect individuals' stories.

Participants were asked what time best suited them in order to decrease the stress factor before reserving appointments. During the interviews, for getting more reliable answers from interviewees, anonymous options were given to them, so they were relaxed and positive. As Boikhutso (2013) conducted in his research, the questions were written in such a way that any misunderstandings would be avoided. According to Eskola and Suoranta (2005), the reliability of a study may be enhanced by pre-planning the interview and drafting extra or follow-up questions. Besides the prepared questions, aiming to gain more information, additional questions were used in some interviews. Additional questions were

asked of the participants throughout the interviews to ensure that the researcher understood the interviewee accurately.

Internal validity defined by Cook and Campbell (1979:37) as “the approximate validity with which we can infer that a relationship is causal.” According to Leedy and Ormrod (2001) and Al-Haddad (2014), establishing internal validity in a study could be accomplished by using the following methods: 1. A controlled study, in which the study is conducted under preplanned circumstances; 2. A blinding experiment, in which both the study administrators and participants do not know the hypothesis of the study; 3. An inappreciable procedure, in which participants are unaware to record their actions; 4. Triangulation by gathering data from multiple sources.

At the data analysis phase, using the triangulation technique will enhance the validity and reliability of the research results as social science researchers suggest (Miles and Huberman (1984); Smith (1983)). Hussey and Hussey (1997) claim that in the same study, multiple approaches, methods, and techniques may be used to overcome possible bias. In this study, data source triangulation and methodological triangulation were performed.

Al-Haddad (2014:100) illustrates how external validity is established in research depending on her understating of Leedy and Ormrod’s book (2001):

*External validity is established through (a) a real-life setting, where there are no artificial settings and the research yields results with broader applicability to other real-world contexts; (b) a representative sample where the findings about that studied sample can be generalized to a wider population; and (c) replication in a different context where the same conclusion can be reached when the same study is conducted under other circumstances.*

This study used representative samples and a real-life setting.

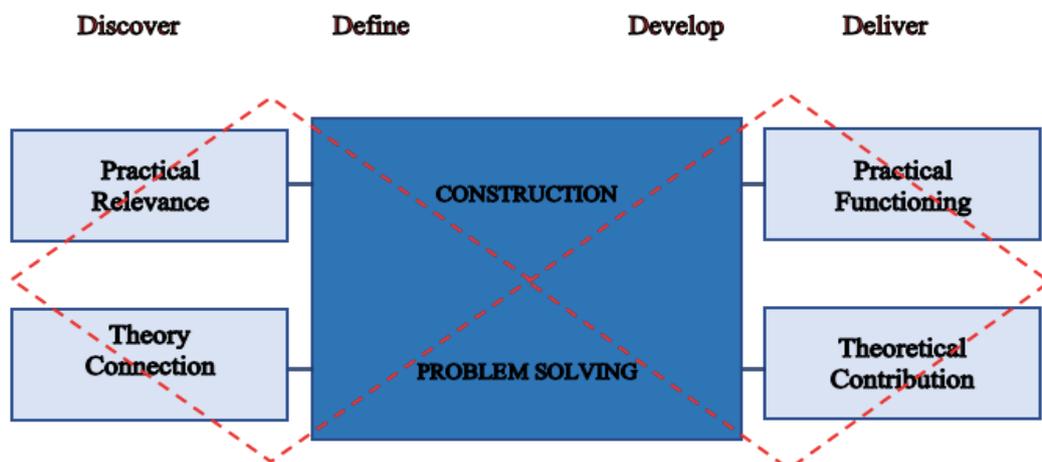
The statistical conclusion validity depends on the correct conclusion about the existence of a relationship or not, which is greatly affected by low statistical power as a result of small sample sizes, which makes the researcher either overly optimistic about the existence of a relationship or tends to be overly cautious of its absence, which leads to wrong results (Cohen 1988). So, sample size is too important for enhancing statistical conclusion validity; thus statistical tests require different sample sizes; for example, factor analysis requires nearly 200 as a sample size (Comrey and Lee 1992), but correlation and regression analysis could be enough and require a sample size of 50 (Van Voorhis and Morgan 2007).

Thus, in this dissertation, the sample size of 218 can be considered adequate for achieving statistical power for the tests conducted.

### 3.3 Target group

Newly arrived Arabic-speaking migrants from 17 up to 65 years, who can be a PES Office customer, coming from different refugee-exporting countries, were the target group of this study. This group was selected for two reasons. The first one is because the most refugees during the 2015–16 refugee crisis speak Arabic. The second reason was my mother language is Arabic, which is advantageous both for the participants and for me as a researcher (Abdullah 2017). However, being affected by VALKO II was a main criteria for choosing interviewed participants and accepting questionnaire's responses. The rationale for this criterion was to avoid a large disparity between individuals who were impacted by VALKO II and those who had resided in Finland for a longer period of time. The third reason is my work experience. I have worked with Arabic refugees on different stages of integration as I mentioned before in this research when I talked about my motivation for doing this study.

### 3.4 Research Conducting



**Figure 24.** Conducting research steps, developed by the researcher by integrating the service design diamond model (British Design Council, 2015) with a constructive research approach in business science (Kasanen et al. 1991).

To address this problem, we used an integrated model from the service design diamond model and a construction approach.

In the diagnostic phase, discovering the problem was a starting point, which focused on gathering information, insights, and identifying customers' needs. The second step was defining the problem to identify and analyze problems and to define and create a creative brief. After the problem definition, the specification phase starts by developing solutions through exploring many ways to solve the problem, and after that, delivering a solution step by giving recommendations and providing practical solutions/propositions to the Finnish government.

#### 3.4.1 First step: Discovering the problem

Aiming to discover the problem, we designed a survey based on the VALKO II measures, theoretical framework, and work experience for assessing VALKO II measures and generating knowledge of customers' satisfaction and opinions about government policy VALKO II measures and the implementation of VALKO II by the Uusimaa Employment and Economic Development Office.

In the questionnaire phase, we were cautious of how useful the collected data are as many researchers highlighted (Babbie 1973; Kahn and Cannell 1957; McGaw and Watson 1976; Moser and Kalton 1972).

The first page of the survey has, as Kraut (1996) determines, a short description of how to answer to questions as well as include detailed instructions. Firstly, the questionnaire was divided into four sections; the first section was concerned with the classes of demographic independent variables (age, gender, city, level of education, migration year to Finland, family reunification needs, kind of residence, and current situation). The second section was concerned with responders' satisfaction with VALKO II measures. The third section was concerned with assessing the implementation of VALKO II by the Uusimaa Employment and Economic Development Office. The last section was for discovering respondents' opinions about integration, the meaning of integration, and their priorities.

According to Woodside (2010), the principal logic used in PhD dissertations is the survey method with a 5- or 7-point scale (e.g., strongly disagree to strongly agree). Here, the questions were mostly multiple-choice, and participants were asked to express their thoughts on a 5-point Likert-type scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Furthermore, free text boxes (Comments in Survey) were included below the questionnaire to collect more information about users' thoughts. This allowed respondents to express their comments in free text form

(Dix et al. 2004). According to Stone et al. (2005), surveys that include a combination of closed and open questions are more effective. It is worth noting that the questions were written considering the recommendations of Rea and Parker (2005) and Babbie (2010) about writing good survey questions by using familiar and explicit language and simple words and making survey items concise.

Additionally, because the primary goal of this research is to evaluate the Finnish integration program and collect as much comprehensive and reliable data as possible, interviews were conducted because they are regarded as an important method for gathering data (Myers and Newman 2007). A total of 20 face-to-face interviews were conducted with open-ended questions that allowed the participants to elaborate freely and open-mindedly without a constrained feeling. We utilized selective parts of the same questionnaire to obtain more in-depth insider perspectives on the whole process (Zafar 2019).

At the beginning of the interview, the interview's purpose and method were explained to assuage participants' worries of being victimized or having their status endangered as a result of their participation. Their replies and identities would remain anonymous. Assuring the confidentiality of replies and ensuring anonymity improved the chance of obtaining more trustworthy findings. The interviewees were also told that they were not obligated to answer all of the questions and that they may reserve their comments on any that they felt uncomfortable answering (Boikhutso 2013). To record important information during interviews, notes were taken.

All the interviews were conducted in Arabic. Axiomatically, it is more advantageous to collect data by conducting the interviews in a language that the participants are most familiar with and at ease with. Another reason we chose to interview in Arabic, Abdulla's (2017) idea based on Heidegren (2003), appealed to me, and we like to follow her in this study, which was recognition, since giving the immigrants the opportunity to use their language is part of multidimensional recognition. Another advantage that should be mentioned was the willingness to make the information more accurate and valid by gathering respondents' statements entirely without the interference of an interpreter.

When we compared the interviews to the previously gathered data, the interviews helped to validate the results. This allowed me to perform a true cross-validation of our findings (Zafar 2019) and gather additional insights into the Finnish integration measures and implementations.

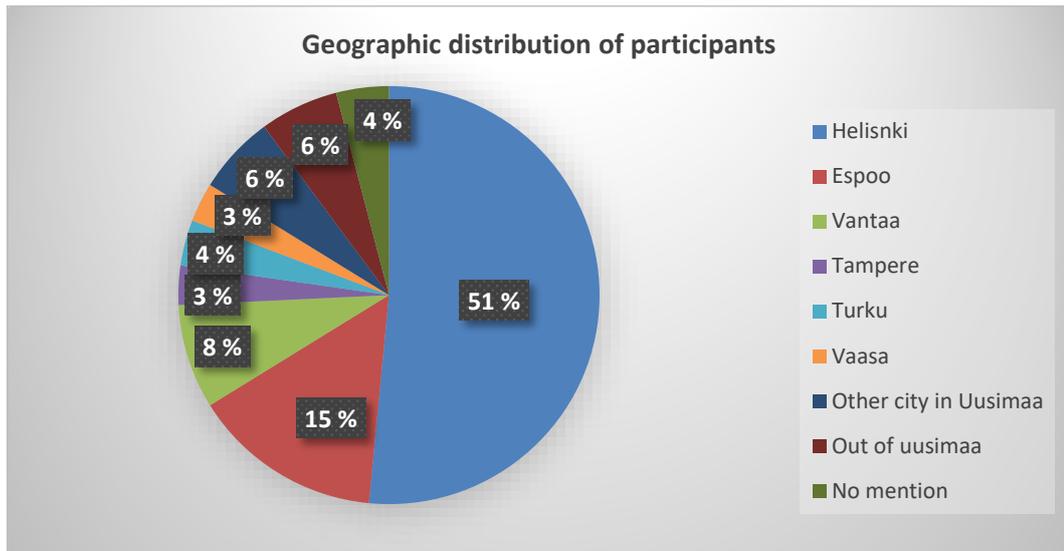
### 3.4.1.1 Insights into participants (First section)

The population of this study was 218 persons. Survey data were collected at the end of 2019. The surveys have not been coded, and all participants have been kept anonymous. The group consisted of 23% women and 77% men; 27% were between 17 and 24 years old, 41% were between 25 and 34 years old, another 25% were between 35 and 44 years old, and 7% were 45 years old and older. It was not surprising that there was such a big difference between the percentage of participants by gender or the difference in the distribution between the ages of the participants because the participation percentage corresponds very closely to the demographic percentage of refugees coming to Finland in 2015. Most of the refugees are young males. The population of this study compared with the population of refugees from 2015–2019 as published in the statistics of the Finnish migration service website that we visited in February 2020. The summary of the sample characteristics is shown in Table 4.

**Table 4.** Gender and age percentage by all participants:

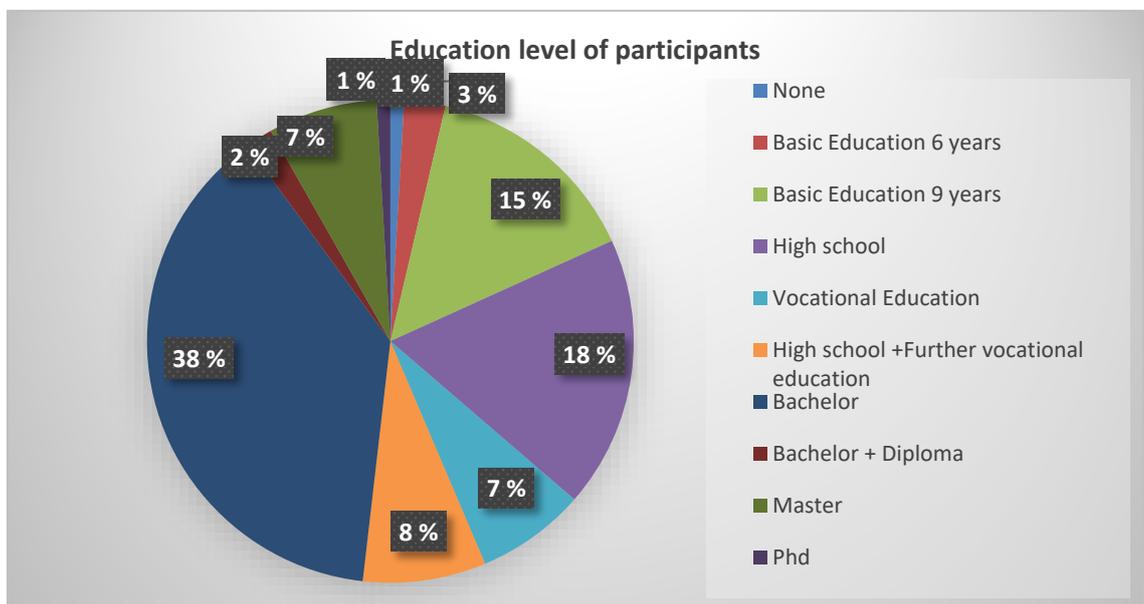
Gender	Male	77%
	Female	23%
Age	17-24	27%
	25-34	41%
	35-44	25%
	45-54	6%
	55-65	1%

Participants of this study were located in different geographical areas of Finland, but just over three-quarters of the participants live in Uusimaa, more than half in Helsinki at 51%, and 29% in Uusimaa (Helsinki excluded). Others were located in big cities: Turku, Tampere, Vaasa, and other Finnish cities outside of Uusimaa (see Figure 25).



**Figure 25.** Geographic distribution of participants

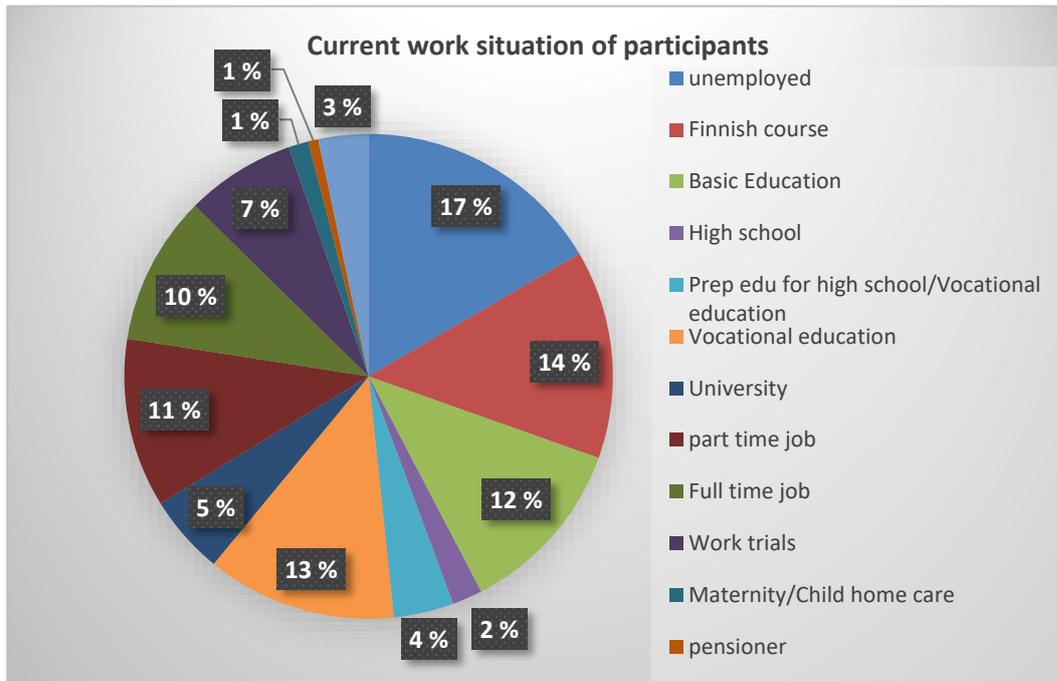
Relating to education, the questionnaire also helped to gather data on individual qualifications. Figure 26 illustrates the educational levels of participants; 36% didn't hold a vocational or university degree; only 18% of them had a basic education; 17% hold vocational and further vocational degrees; 38% held a bachelor's degree, and 10% were postgraduates.



**Figure 26.** Education level of participants

Finally, the research questionnaire also asked all respondents about their current work/study situation at the time. The current situation of the respondents is shown in figure 27; the collected data shows that the employment rate among responders

is about 21% with 10% of them working a full-time job. About 50% of respondents were still in different stages of study in language courses, basic, vocational, high schools, and others, and 7% of the respondents were participating in work trials. Of the participants, 17% were still struggling with unemployment. Some were just waiting for their next step, which may be a new language course, entering a vocational school, or waiting to enter the job market.



**Figure 27.** Current work situation of participants

### 3.4.1.2 Data analyses

The collected data from the questionnaire have been analyzed using the statistical software SPSS version 24. The 5-point Likert-type scale was used in the questionnaire. The range is determined by  $(5-1 = 4)$  then divided by five because the largest value of the scale  $(4 \div 5 = 0.80)$  is used to establish the minimum and maximum length of the 5-point Likert-type scale. Then, in order to determine the maximum of this cell, the number one, which is the lowest value on the scale, was added. The length of the cells is calculated as follows:

- From 1 to 1.80 represents (strongly disagree);
- From 1.81 until 2.60 represents (do not agree);
- From 2.61 until 3.40 represents (true to some extent);

- From 3:41 until 4:20 represents (agree); and
- From 4:21 until 5:00 represents (strongly agree).

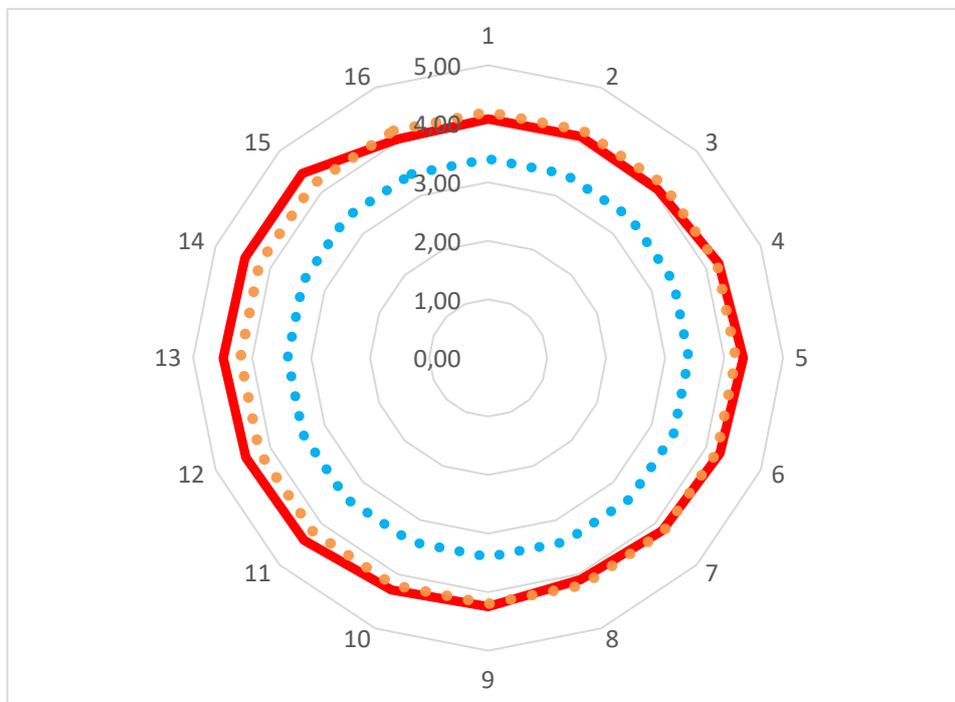
Second section of questionnaire was concerned with responders' satisfactions with VALKO II measures (Table 5).

**Table 5.** Data relating second section of questionnaire was concerned with responders' satisfactions with VALKO II measures.

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Total Correlation	Item-Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Q1	25.8791	33.462	.405	.821
Q2	25.8837	33.159	.388	.823
Q3	25.8605	33.429	.335	.827
Q4	26.0233	34.387	.430	.820
Q5	26.1256	34.428	.295	.828
Q6	26.0512	32.180	.581	.810
Q7	25.9674	33.667	.373	.823
Q8	25.9023	33.182	.381	.823
Q9	26.0558	34.034	.333	.826
Q10	26.0837	33.348	.531	.814
Q11	26.2093	33.624	.617	.812
Q12	26.2419	33.483	.515	.815
Q13	26.2930	33.872	.536	.815
Q14	26.2651	33.710	.544	.814
Q15	26.2512	33.413	.582	.812
Q16	25.8372	32.791	.430	.820

Figure 28 shows the mean of closeness between VALKO II measures and refugees' agreement with these measures was 4.26, which is close to strongly agree. As a result, most of the participants strongly agree with VALKO II measures. So, why didn't VALKO II work even though most participants agree with those measures?

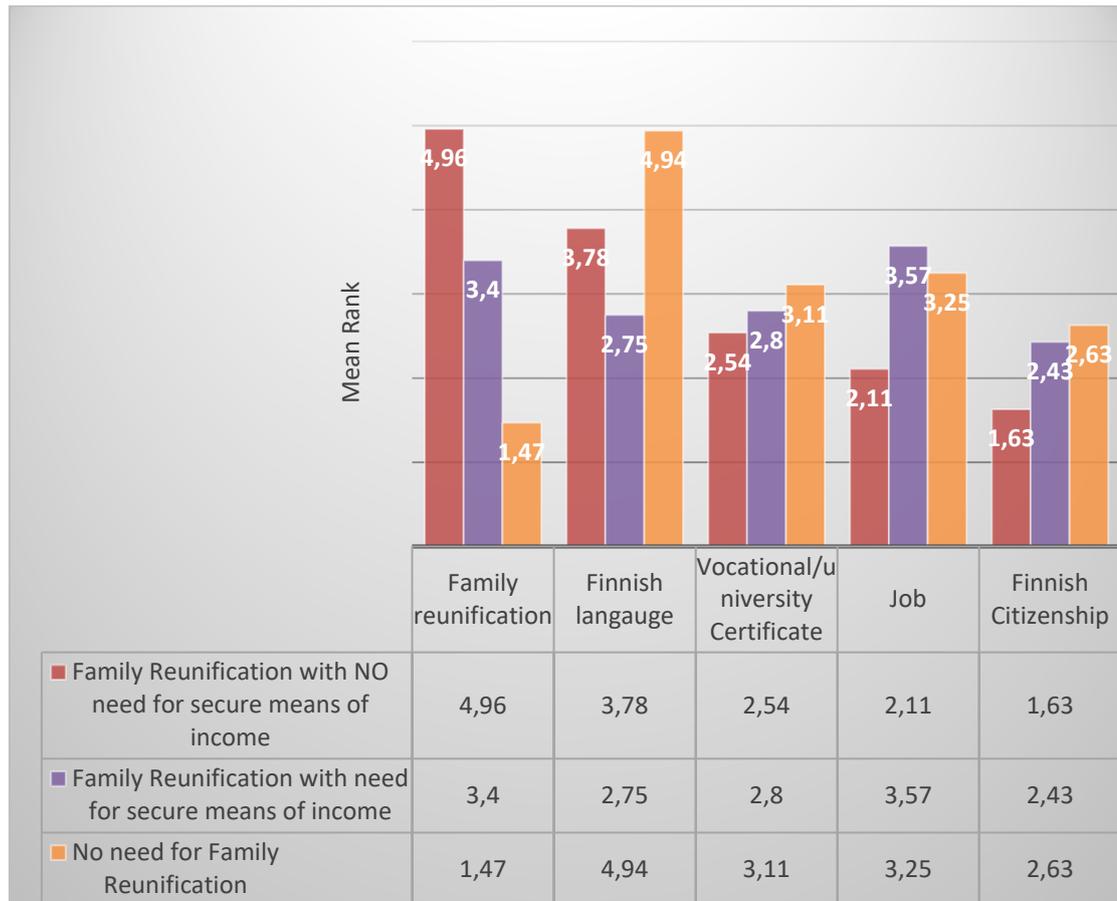


**Figure 28.** Mean of closeness between VALKO II measures and refugees' agreement with these measures

-The collected data from the second section of the questionnaire are concerned with the responders' priorities. We found a variance in results. We did interviews, literature was reviewed again, and a search through new Finnish legalizations and policies in parallel for finding why that's happening. We found the phenomena related to two separate research questions.

The question was, "Could you rank your priorities in Finland after getting a residence permit?" Answers were family reunion, learning Finnish language, getting vocational /university certificate from Finnish institute, work, and getting Finnish citizenship. This related to the question, "Do you have family reunification issues?" and to the question, "What kind of residence permit do you have?" This leads to classifying refugees depending on whether a secure means of support was required or not.

We reorganized and reanalyzed collected data depending on those questions (see Figure 29)



**Figure 29.** Priorities of refugees based on their classification regarding family reunification situation

Depending on results, three classified groups had different priorities. The first group had a family reunification process, but secure means of support weren't required, the second group had a family reunification process and needed secure means of support, and a third group had no family reunification process.

The first group priorities (see Figure 30) were:

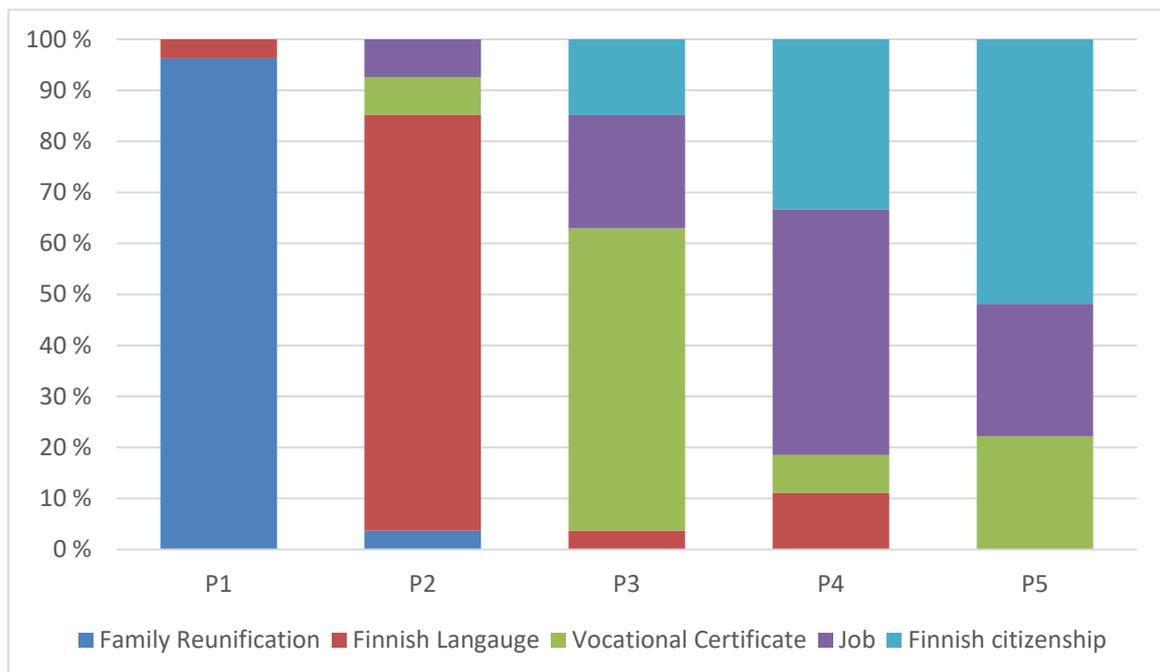
1. Family reunification;
2. Learning the Finnish language;
3. Acquiring a professional certificate;
4. Getting a job; and
5. Getting Finnish citizenship.

The second group priorities (see Figure 31) were:

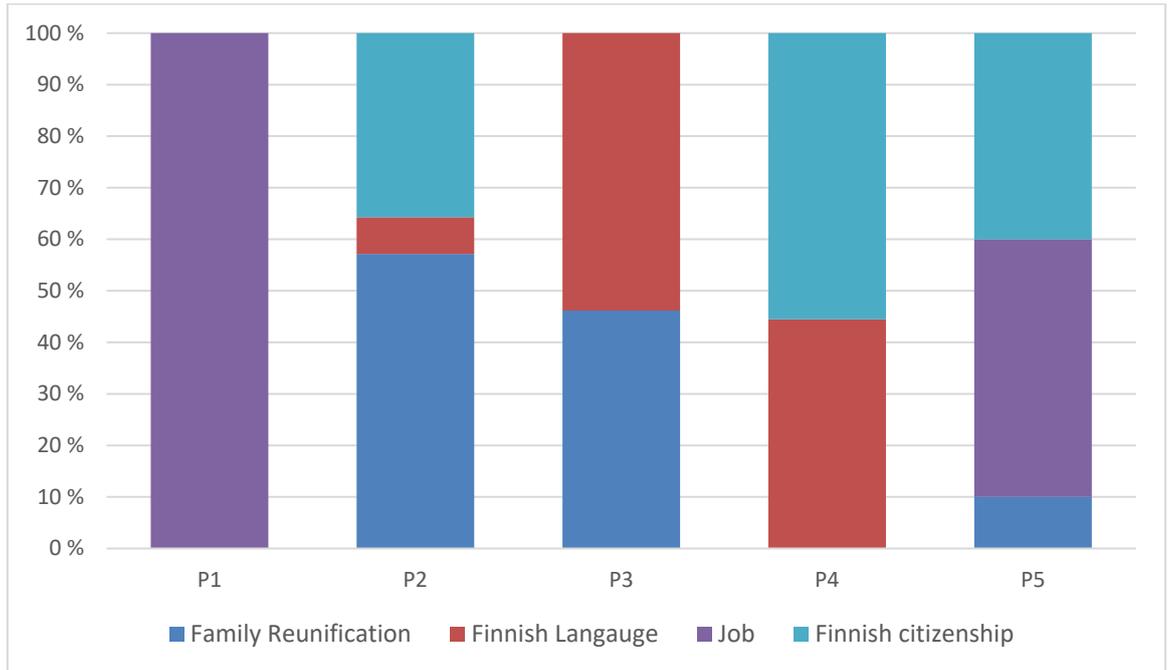
1. Getting a job;
2. Family reunification;
3. Learning the Finnish language or acquiring professional certificate; and
4. Getting Finnish citizenship.

The third group priorities (see Figure 32) were:

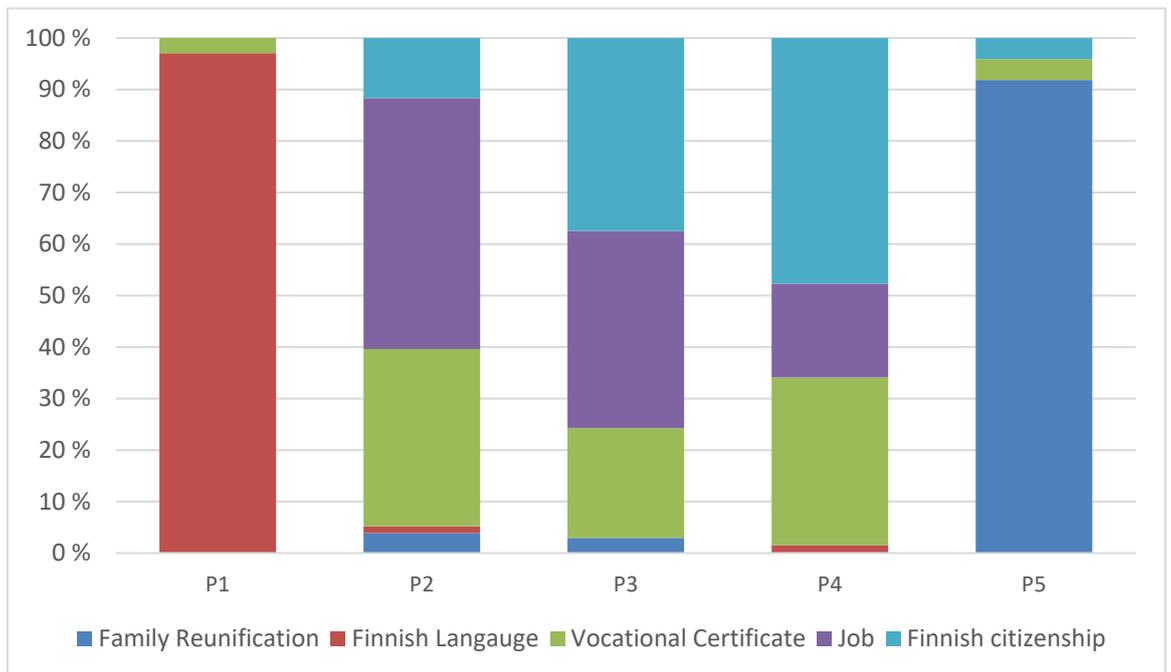
1. Learning the Finnish language;
2. Acquiring a professional certificate;
3. Getting a job; and
4. Getting Finnish citizenship.



**Figure 30.** Prioritized goals of refugees who have family reunification with no need for a secure means of income.



**Figure 31.** Prioritized goals of refugees who have family reunification with a need for a secure means of income.



**Figure 32.** Prioritized goals of refugees who have no need of family reunification

### 3.4.2 Second Step: Defining the problem

We focused on priorities of refugees for defining the problem as a user-centered design approach:

- I. Family reunification
- II. Integration services (integration training, vocational education, employment services)

#### I. Family reunification

There are different priorities between the Finnish government (2015-2019) and beneficiaries of international protection. The first priority for beneficiaries of international protection who came without family is family reunification, which is in contrast to government policy priorities. In December 2015, the Finnish government issued a government action plan on an asylum policy with the primary aim of making Finland a less attractive destination. The government drafted a significant restriction of conditions for family reunification as a form of reducing “pull factors.”

In this section, we tried to understand the family reunification situation in Finland for defining the problem.

#### Family reunification situation in Finland for refugees

Starting from January 7, 2016, Finnish Immigration Services launched new rules. If Finnish Immigration Services makes a positive decision on an asylum seeker’s application, they will get one of the following:

- Asylum or refugee status;
- Subsidiary protection; or
- A residence permit on other grounds.

According to the new rules, in many cases, secure means of support is required for getting a residence permit. “Secure means of support” means that you have sufficient funds to live in Finland.

Existing family members of a person who has been granted a **refugee status** on or after **July 1, 2016**, can apply for a residence permit on the basis of family ties **three months** without secure means of support. After three months, they can apply for family reunification only if they have sufficient income. Existing family members of a person who has been granted a residence permit on

**subsidiary protection** or **on other grounds** indicates that a family member can apply for family reunification only if they have sufficient income. New family members of recipients of all kinds of positive decision must have a secure means of support (Finnish Immigration Service 2020). Table 6 compares secure means of support request situations in Finland before and after changes relating to family reunification:

**Table 6.** Comparison table of secure means of support request situations in Finland relating to family reunification:

Finnish Spouse	Foreign Spouse	Subsidiary protection		Refugee		
		Before 1.7.2016	After 1.7.2016	Before 1.7.2016	After 1.7.2016	
					Applying within 3 months	Applying after 3 months
Not required	Required	Not required	Required	Not required	Not required	Required

The chart was designed by the researcher depending on the Finnish Immigration Services website.

Means of support are calculated depending on net income (i.e., income that remains after tax and after employer's and employee's pension and insurance contributions have been taken out (Finnish Immigration Service 2020). So, a person wishing to bring their family to Finland would need to have a net income per month, as shown in Table 7.

**Table 7.** Income needed to secure an applicant's means of support in Finland

Person	EUR/month	EUR/year
one adult	1,000	12,000
another adult living in the same household	700	8,400
one family member younger than 18	500	6,000
second family member younger than 18	400	4,800
third family member younger than 18	300	3,600
fourth family member younger than 18	200	2,400
fifth family member younger than 18	100	1,200
sixth family member younger than 18 and other family members after that	0	0

Source: Finnish Immigration Services

That means if a person wishes to bring their spouse with two children to Finland, they need to have a net income of at least 2,600 euros.

To understand what kind of people and what professions could fulfill Finnish immigration requests according to secure income, Table 8 shows the net income from work corresponding to this income based on the Finnish tax and average salaries corresponding to professions in the Finnish labor market which are calculated based on 2016 data.

**Table 8.** Required net income for family reunification in Finland and relative salaries

Family	Net income	Income from work	profession couldn't get required income
2 adults	1700	2091	Laundry worker, Child Care Assistant, Real estate worker, Workshop worker, Environmental Workers, Cleaners
2 adults + child	2200	2907	Nursing and health care workers, Car mechanic, Kindergarten teachers, Building Skilled Worker, Dental hygienist, Research assistant, Waiters, Bus and tram drivers,
2 adults + 2 children	2600	3622	Nurse, Social worker, Electronics technician, Customer service Employees, Pharmacist, Accountant, Expert, IT Expert, Optician, Library Director
2 adults + 3 children	2900	4170	Service manager, Researcher, Financial expert, Elementary and high School teacher, civil and environmental Engineer, Psychologist
2 adults + 4 children	3100	4552	Engineer, Company Research, Lecturer, Permits architect
2 adults + 5 children or more	3200	4743	Veterinarian, development Expert, Director of kindergarten, Lectures at University of Applied Sciences

The chart was designed by the researcher depending on the Finnish immigration service, Finnish Tax Administration, Statistics for Finland 2016

The Finnish government was not alone in restrictions of family reunification conditions. Other European countries also have tightened criteria, but Finland has the most restrictive regulations when it relates to family reunification for refugees (see Table 9). Finland requires a secure means of support from the person who has been granted a residence permit on subsidiary protection, but most European countries don't differentiate asylum seekers who have been granted a positive decision depending on the kind of decision.

Also, when comparing secure means of support requirements, Finnish requirements are stricter than others. For example, see Table 10 to compare the requirements for households comprising two adults and two children. In Finland, the required net income is 2600 € monthly, so that means the required income from work is 3622 € before tax. In Sweden, it is just 1355 € and in Austria 1687€. In the Netherlands it is 1745€ and in Norway 2400€.

**Table 9.** Comparing family reunification situation between Finland and other European countries relating to secure means of support

	Subsidiary protection		Refugee	
	applying within 3 months	applying after 3 months	applying within 3 months	applying after 3 months
Finland	Required		Not Required	Required
Germany	Not Required	Required	Not Required	Required
Sweden	Not Required	Required	Not Required	Required
Norway	Not Required (registering within 6 months and handling within 12 months)	Required (applying after 12 months)	Not Required (registering within 6 months and handling within 12 months)	Required (applying after 12 months)
Netherlands	Not Required	Required	Not Required	Required
Austria	Required (waiting time for applying 3 years)		Not Required	Required

The chart was designed by the researcher depending on Finnish immigration services, The German Federal office for migration and refugees, The Swedish Migration Agency, The Norwegian Directorate of immigration UDI, Immigration and Naturalization Service IND Netherlands, and Austrian Federal office for immigration and asylum BFA.

**Table 10.** Comparing required income level for a family consisting of 2 adults, 2 children (Monthly €) between Finland (work income) and some other European countries

Required income level for a family consisting of a sponsor, their spouse and two children (monthly €)	
Finland	3622 €
UK	2442 €
Sweden	1355 €
Norway	2400 €
Netherlands	1745 €
Austria	1687 €

The chart was designed by researcher depending on the Finnish immigration services, Gov.UK, Swedish Migration Agency, The Norwegian Directorate of Immigration UDI, Immigration and Naturalization Service IND Netherlands, and Austrian Federal office for immigration and asylum BFA

During this research, we realized in Finland there is discrimination in family reunification applications submitting places between citizens of Syria and Iraq, and other citizens.

- Citizens of Syria and Iraq should handle their matters only at the embassy of Finland in Turkey (FP 2017).
- Other citizens could handle their matters at the embassy of Finland in the country where they reside legally (residence permit, visa, or a certificate of registration as a refugee or as an applicant for refugee status in the country where they apply for a residence permit in Finland) (Finnish Immigration Service).

The problem started on August 1, 2016, when Turkey required a visa from Syrians to enter Turkey, which made it nearly impossible. Compared with the Swedish solution, Finland reacted to this problem slowly, and the solution provided was unreachable for all Syrians and unsustainable in the long-term (see Table 11).

**Table 11.** Comparison table between Finnish and Swedish solutions for the problem of Syrians entering Turkey

	Finland	Sweden
Reaction	Finnish migration mission travel to Lebanon for receiving family reunion applications	Syrians residing in Syria could apply in UAE, Turkey, Jordan, Egypt, Saudi Arabia. Palestinian refugees residing in Syria could apply in the Honorary Consulate in Lebanon.
Reaction time	≈ year (First mission was 30.1.-3.2.2017)	6 months 1.7.2016
Waiting time for next mission	around 6-8 months	--
Reachable	Not reachable for all Syrians ex: Syrians in Egypt, or Syrians without passports in other countries	Reachable
Sustainability	No	Yes
Cost of solution	Expensive comparing Swedish solution	No extra costs
Effect on integration	Bad effect, Stressful, Unwanted feeling	Sense of equality
Long of process	More than others	Same others

The chart was designed by the researcher depending on the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, The Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Finnish Immigration Services/Migri, Finnish Parliament 2017, Bridges for Syrian's Seminar on Challenges of family reunification 2016, Yle News November 22, 2016.

### 3.4.2.1 Impact on Syrian refugee's life

The circumstances of family reunification delays dealt with more than costs. In a decision on a complaint about the processing of a residence permit application that took more than a year, the Finnish deputy chancellor of justice criticized the Finnish Immigration Services. Finnish Immigration Services is obligated by law to make a decision on such applications within 9 months (YEL ,2019).

Besides that, family reunification costs for Syrian refugees are not easy to manage. Family reunification costs for an adult are 470 €, for a child 250€, and for legalization of a document 30€ (Migri 2017). As an example, family reunification applications for 1 adult, 2 children; 970€ + 90 € (marriage certificate and 2 birth certificates) + 250-400 € travel costs= 1310-1460 €.

1400 €  $\approx$  840000 Syrian pounds (exchange rate calculated on 6.2019). An average Syrian salary is  $\approx$  50000 Syrian pounds. The cost of family reunification  $\approx$  16 X the average Syrian salary. It's nearly impossible to manage this amount, especially during war. Syrian refugees who came to Finland in 2015 suffered from a long family reunification process and family maintenance costs until a solution was delivered.

Further discrimination also concerned social benefits. For example, Table 12 illustrates that family benefits paid by the Social Insurance Institution of Finland (Kela) for foreigners, who work in Finland while their family lives outside of Finland, are different if the foreigner is from the EU, an EEA country, or Switzerland or from outside Europe, as most refugees are. A refugee doesn't get child benefits or child home care if his family doesn't live in Finland, but an EU worker in Finland gets those benefits.

**Table 12.** Child benefits paid by Finnish Social Insurance Institution (Kela) to foreign workers in Finland, but their family lives outside of Finland

	Refugee and citizens of other than EU or EEA or Switzerland	EU or EEA country or Switzerland	
Child benefit	No	Spouse doesn't work	Spouse works
		Yes	Yes (partly) (If the total amount of benefits from Finland is larger than the amount of benefits from child's residence country Finland pays the difference.)
Child home care benefit	No	Yes	

The chart was designed by researcher depending on the Finnish Social Insurance Institution (Kela)

-Impact of family reunification policies from social studies and existing literature:

**The 2019 edition of the OECD International Migration Outlook:** This research is the first to look at the relationship between family presence and long-term integration results for migrants in OECD nations. Studies shows that the results of the delayed family reunification procedures on the salaries of immigrants become clear after ten years or more, as the affected immigrant receives much lower salaries compared to other immigrants as a result of the delay in investment in education for example. Also, its negative consequences are clearly evident on the integration of children like language proficiency level, educational achievement, employment and their salaries.

**A new beginning of refugee integration in Europe,** UNHCR research 2013 has highlighted the importance of family reunification as it plays a significant role in alleviating the sense of isolation that refugees can face. Also, family separation affects on engagement's ability in many aspects of the integration process like learning, getting job, socializing resistance, and overall progression, while its long-

term absence negatively affects physical and emotional health like depression and isolation. It is well-documented in French literature that the refugees' first intention is family reunification upon receiving a decision (Rezai 1998; Mlati and Duarte 2005; Beläisch and Petersell 2010; Blanco and Barou 2011)

**A report of the Swedish Red Cross and Sociala Missionen** also stresses that emotions of unfairness and powerlessness are a negative result of long separation and delayed family reunification (Sociala Missionen and Röda Korset 2012:29).

**Toward integration—The Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme in the United Kingdom**, a survey conducted 2017 by the UNHCR with IOM and City University London, declared that separation of family members has severe effects on the well-being of people and rebuilding life' ability especially in the case of forced displacement. Family reunification has a key role in restoring normalcy to the lives especially for refugees who have fled persecution and suffer from forced displacement and assist the family to fully-concentrate on efficient integration (UNHCR 2017).

**De Hart (2013)** mentioned that migrants and their family members cannot build their life while waiting for a reunification decision. Waiting made them live in dreams of the future, the present does not exist, and the clock has stopped waiting for the future to continue again. There is no taste for life at all. Strik, de Hart, and Nissen (2013) vividly describe that many individual respondents illustrate that their lives during the waiting time were on hold, meaningless, and full of anxiety with no plans for the future like buying a house or starting an education, etc.

The effects of family reunification requirements such as an income requirement, pre-entry test and other restrictions were selective as achieving the requirements was more difficult for women, low-educated people, certain nationalities, and ethnic groups, and older people according to Strik et al. (2013).

In the case of Finland, we found that the income requirement affects significantly on refugees because there are many obstacles to finding a job, such as Benton and Diegert (2018) point out, low language level, lack of work experience or references in the new country, skills or qualifications that are not recognized or not suitable for a working life in the new country, limited networks, and lack of understanding of the local employment culture. The income requirements were requested from the refugees without taking into account that they were selected and granted residence permit on humanitarian grounds rather than work efficiency considerations.

Another bad effect for required income is pushing refugees to accept any kind of job even when the refugee is highly educated or experienced. Consequently, under-employment in the labor market is a common for a refugee's experience.

After reviewing the above, we conclude that family reunification restriction has a **cobra effect!** Unfortunately, it became clear that Finland had fallen into a trap of unintended effects of the restriction of family reunification, and Finnish government policies related to family reunification negatively affect integration and the Finnish government integration program.

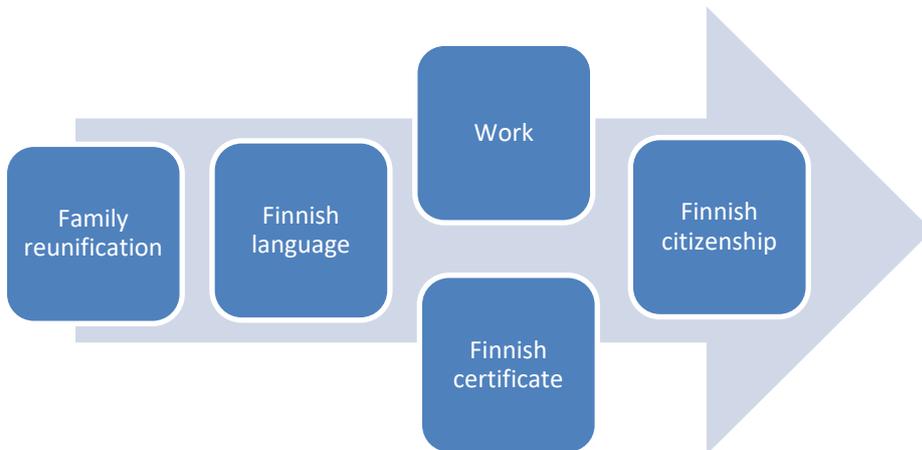
If refugees feel discriminated against in terms of their legal rights, this can have a significant negative impact on their integration attempts. When refugees are made to learn about an idyllic version of society and its shared values that vastly differ from their own lived experiences, as in the case of refugees who learn about justice, equality, and the importance of family but face routine discrimination.

Refugee reaction to this policy is harmful for the refugee himself and their family and even for Finland. A bad effect on the refugee and family is pushing family to come illegally to Finland and applying by themselves for asylum as the last/fast solution. Rami said, "I can't live without my family. I love my kids. I will bring them here by smuggling. I know it's dangerous but no options." That means pushing them to contact smugglers and human traffickers to arrange a way to bring the family illegally to Finland. Human trafficking is both dangerous and expensive, and a family sponsor in Finland must also arrange the cost of travel, and this may force them to be a black job market victim or under-employment victim, and both are harmful for Finland.

Also, a harmful effect for the Finnish economy is changing the reason for participating in the Finnish integration courses from studying the Finnish language to being forced in classrooms for fear of cutting social benefits or seeking social benefits for managing family reunification costs.

The next figures (33, 34, 35) illustrate how refugee life steps and priorities have changed before and after the government policy:

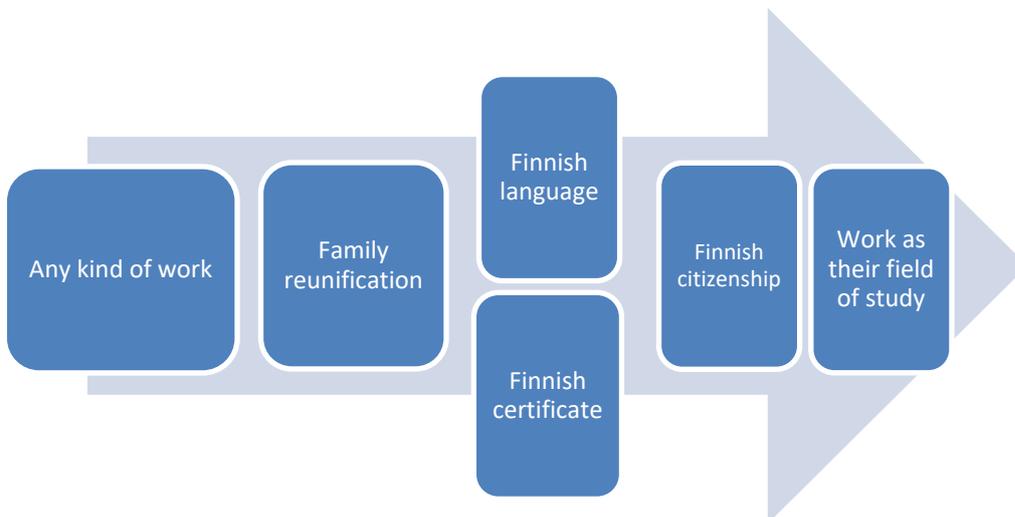
Before government policy:



**Figure 33.** Refugee life steps and priorities before government policy

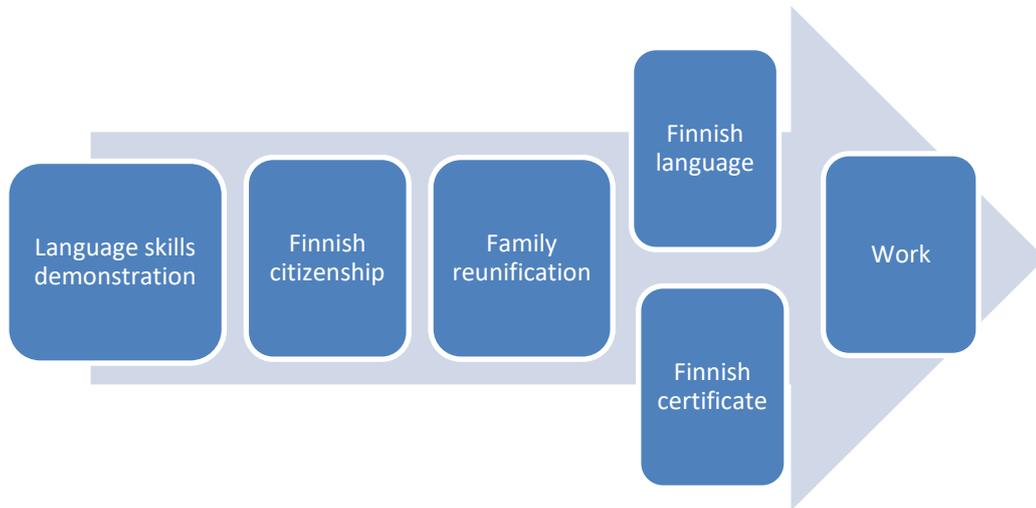
After government policy:

- a. There is a possibility for a refugee fulfilling the condition of a secure means of support.



**Figure 34.** Refugee priorities after government policy for a refugee could fulfill the condition of a secure means of support.

- b. There is no possibility of a refugee fulfilling the condition of secure means of support.



**Figure 35.** Refugee priorities after government policy for a refugee could not fulfill the condition of a secure means of support.

The Finnish government policy and Finnish Immigration Services have forced some refugees to be language skills demonstration seekers instead of language learners for getting Finnish citizenship. Here, we should ask ourselves, “Is language skills demonstration different from learning a language?” Yes, the aim is to get any kind of certificate that could be used for applying for Finnish citizenship even if this certificate is needless or useless for the future like studying in needless basic education or in useless vocational education. Finland invests a lot of money in integration courses and adult basic/vocational education, but, unfortunately, affected by the new policy, some migrants enroll in them for goals different from what the Finnish government designed them for.

Here, we should also mention the difficulty of passing the National Certificate of Language Proficiency test (YKI) for some migrants. There are even some exceptions to the language skills requirement; it’s still unclear or unconfirmed if a migrant will get exceptions or not. This prompted some migrants to be on the safe side and try skipping the test by demonstrating language skills in other ways such as gaining a needless basic education certificate or useless vocational qualification certificates. Finnish Immigration Services is trying to close this door by assessing practical language skills when a migrant contacts them. The Netherlands, for example, is more realistic and logical in solving this problem. The Dutch model ensures dispensation to a migrant who cannot be expected to pass the examination because they have shown sufficient efforts to pass the examination (Dutch Immigration and Naturalization Service 2020). When migrants have already tried

hard to integrate, but didn't pass the exams, then they can apply for a dispensation and don't need to do any more exams if their integration period started more than 2.5 years previously, they have attended at least 600 hours of a course, and they have tried to pass all exams at least 4 times (Dutch Immigration and Naturalization service 2020).

In this way, the Finnish government will confirm that all the money invested in integration courses and vocational/basic education will be used in the right way, and all migrants who try to educate themselves in vocational/basic school are just trying to enter the Finnish labor market.

### 3.4.3 Third step developing solutions

Policymakers need to forge an intelligent integration policy that considers the priorities of refugees. Even the best integration program will not work if refugees remain without family. Refugees feel such measures are being done to isolate them from their families.

### 3.4.4 Fourth step delivering solutions

@ Finnish Immigration Service:

- The family reunification process's time should be maxed at 6 months.
- The Dutch dispensation model regarding language requirements for naturalization should be adopted.
- Income requirements for family members of a person who has been granted a subsidiary protection or other grounds in Finland should be removed.

@ Ministry of Foreign Affairs: Removing discrimination on family reunification application submitting places and giving Syrian/Iraqi refugees a possibility of handling their matters at the Finnish embassy in the country where they reside legally as other nationals.

@ The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health/Kela: Rethinking the social benefits system and making it more friendly for families and refugees who are still waiting for a family reunification decision from the Finnish Immigration Services by providing a deduction of family reunification cost or family living cost outside of

Finland during the decision waiting time from wage or salary income. This amount should not count as income when calculating basic social assistance.

### 3.4.5 Defining problems

#### II. Second Problem: Integration services (integration training, vocational education, employment services) implementation

In this chapter, we will try to analyze integration services and implementation of VALKO II from the user's point of view. Also, we will explain and define a "black box of integration services and implementation," and this term first mentioned in an OECD report in 2018 ("Working Together: Skills and Labor Market Integration of Immigrants and their Children in Finland").

#### 3.4.5.1 Situation of integration services in Finland

##### Introduction

The government faces the challenges of ensuring the foreign-born and their children integration (Tanner 2011), that's to say ensuring the social and economic inclusion (Papademetriou et al. 2017) especially for policymakers in OECD countries (OECD 2018). Many countries took steps to improve immigrants' language skills and introduce civic orientation courses to becoming an increasingly important part OECD countries' integration strategy (OECD 2019).

Education and technical level as well as host-country language skills determine immigrants' employment prospects. Since basic language courses do not impart the language skills needed to succeed in working life, many governments have expanded their work-focused language training but designing effective work-focused language systems is not always easy as policy makers must find ways to design it to be also cost-effective and suitable for a wide range occupation and at the same time consider immigrants' basic literacy skills, financial and family circumstances (McHugh and Challinor 2011).

In Finland, a tight economic situation set determinants for the development and increase of provided services accompanying the increase in immigrants' number as the services that support integration must be improved and regenerated, the most important of which are integration courses provided by PES (Borman 2017).

##### Changes in Integration services in Finland

This section illustrates changes that have happened in Finland at three levels:

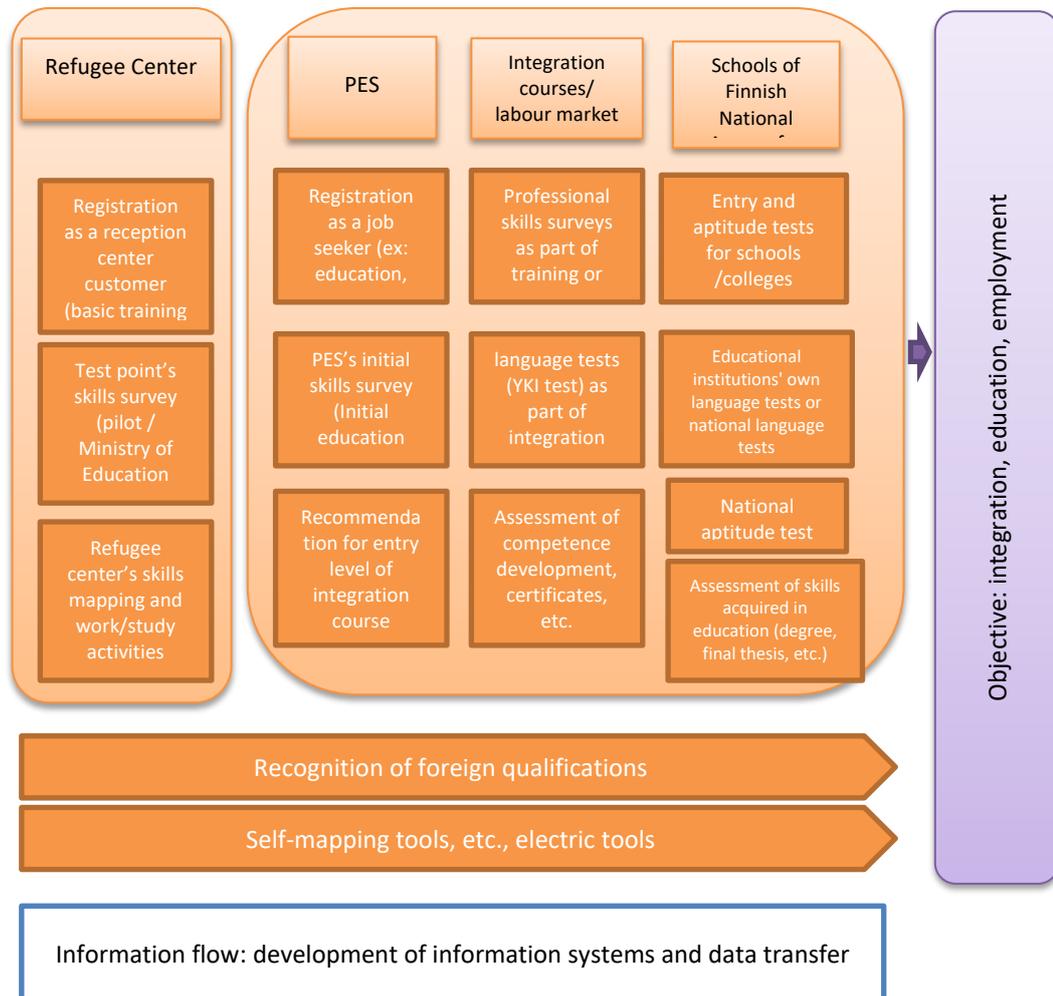
1. Improving skills mapping information transition between different actors and stages;
2. Speeding up the integration process; and
3. New integration training models and their effectiveness.

### **1. Improving skills mapping information transition between different actors and stages**

The Finnish government committed to strengthen preconditions for integration by implementing cross-sectoral procedures and providing efficient initial-stage services. To do this, the government has provided an adequate initial-stage service package that matches individual needs, and the integration process starts without delay (FMEE 2016a).

The Finnish government strives to expedite the start of the integration process for asylum seekers who have already obtained a residence permit by focusing on several points such as the development of cooperation between the authorities, and the flow of information exchange during the refugee's transferring from a reception center to a municipality and becoming a PES customer, in addition to strengthening guidance and counseling services, and conducting the initial assessment to evaluate the general situation of the refugee and the capabilities of integration early without delay (FMEE 2016a).

The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment produced in 2016 the "Faster Education Paths and Flexible Transitions for Immigrant Working Group" for speeding up education paths and ensuring flexible transitions for immigrants and their data from one actor to another (FMEE 2017). This group found that, duplicate and useless mapping may be done to the customer because the information is not transferred from one operator to another. Skills-mapping information tends to become more accurate and deeper with time; in the early stages, the information is more general and inaccurate and often based on the customer's own judgment. As integration progresses, the customer's know-how in relation to the needs of Finnish society can be defined in more detail and precision. Figure 36 maps the skills of migrants entering the labor market as asylum seekers and transferring them at different stages. (FMEE 2017).



**Figure 36.** Mapping job applicants' skills and recording them in different information systems. (FMEE 2017)

The working group presented two points in this field (FMEE 2017):

- Attention must be paid to the instructions for collecting the various phases so that the information can be used in later stages. Coordinated guidelines and consistent information allow for streamlining of the process at a later stage, and information obtained at different stages is complementary and evolving.
- The transfer of knowledge from initial mapping and skills mapping between different actors must be taken into account in the design and

implementation of information system projects and uses of public authorities and educational institutions.

## 2. Speeding up the integration process

The situation before changing:

Overall assessment of integration by all actors in this field is a general lack of integration efficiency and an urgent need to speed up (Bontenbal, Pekkarinen and Lillie 2019).

An initial assessment is the first step of the integration process, which is conducted by the PES Office or the municipality, for immigrants who are unemployed job seekers or receiving income support. It aims to make first contact and to assess the integration preparedness and needed services. After that, if there is a need for an integration plan, it should be created within two weeks after the initial assessment has been made (Bontenbal et al. 2019).

In 2015, the Finnish Ministry of Employment and the Economy started to think about service and organizational reform because of the flood large number of asylum seekers. So, to achieve this goal, a service survey for Employment and Economic Development Offices was conducted and carried out by Ramboll Management Consulting. The report highlights the staff's views on the services of integration service's customers and other immigrants. Also mentioned is the sense of PES counselors for the need for a change in the process of registering (FMEE 2016b:12)

*a new customer of integration service registers as a jobseeker by a paper form. An information desk officer guides them to go home and wait for PES contact. Contact usually takes place by phone and immediately comes upon language problems. With this model the start of customer service process and the steering to language skill tests are delayed. We have been proposing a change in the way we serve for about a year now. This is not a customer-oriented way to serve the customer.*

PES counselors also referred to a fear of lack of resources. There are no longer the human resources to do a separate initial survey. Another point raised in this report is the need of customers for personal service and on-call service; otherwise, they fill the information desk with repeated visits. Customers are frustrated and queues grow. Competence should be concentrated here; this would also depend on PES officer's professionalism (FMEE 2016b).

The situation after changing:

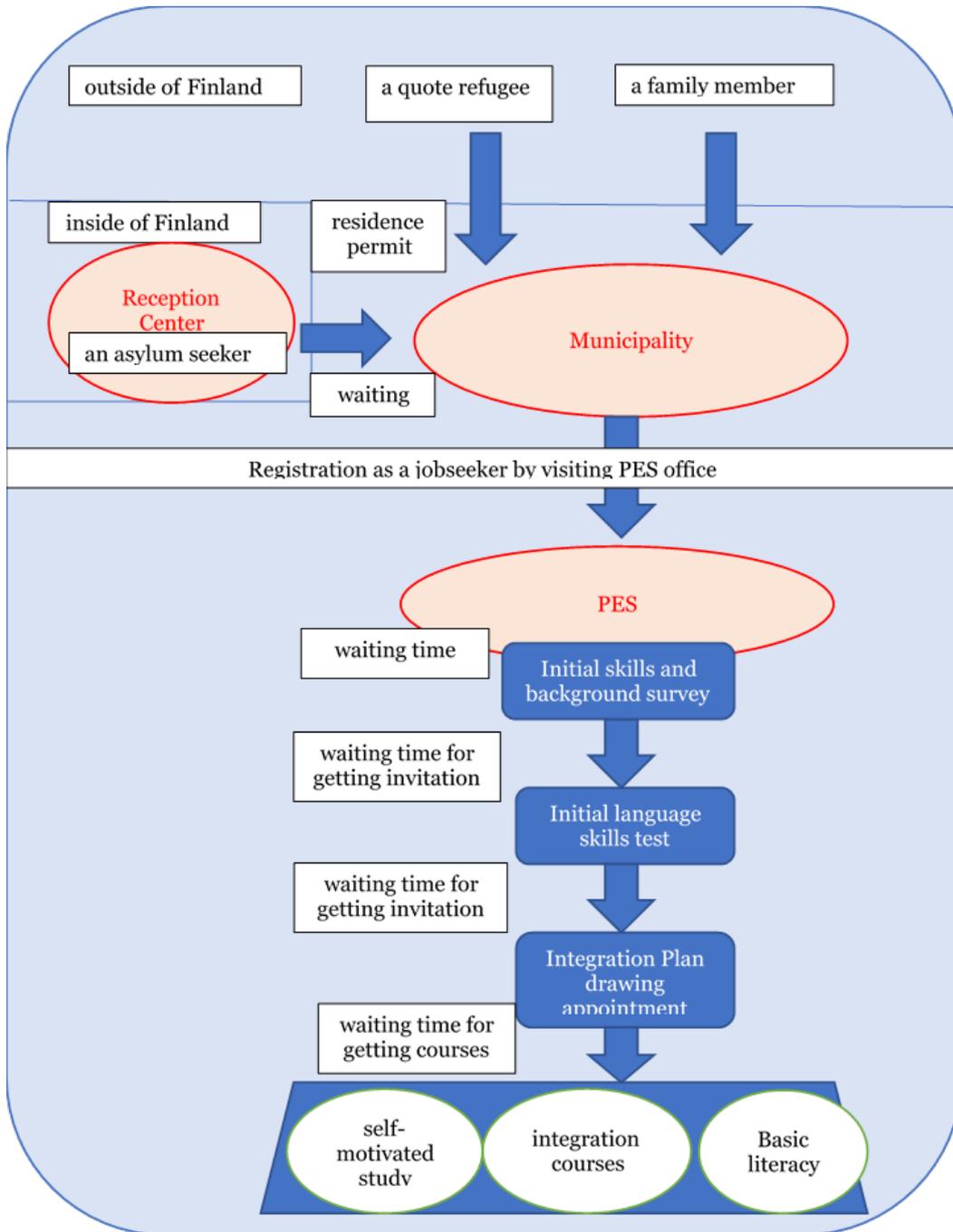
In VALKO II to speed up the integration process, as a first measure, unemployed work-aged persons who have been granted international protection could register in the PES Office as a job seeker already in a refugee center even before getting a place in the municipality. The initial assessment will be conducted in the municipality or the reception center immediately to assess immigrants' abilities for integration services. The target time was set at 2 weeks after the granting of a residence permit. Also, as a target, immigrants should have access to integration training no later than 2 months after the initial language proficiency test (FMEE 2016a).

Also, speeding up integration can be achieved by redirecting resources and streamlining processes (FPMO 2017). This is what happened when the Uusimaa PES Office used a less time-consuming and cost-efficient approach as an additional measure for speeding up the process. First, the PES Office of the Uusimaa region reengineered the process of registration in PES for refugees and expanded it for large language customer groups. The PES Office of the Uusimaa region organized group-model information sections by mother language or through translators for newcomers, information sections were organized in Arabic, Dari/Persian, Sorani, and Somali languages, and information sections were organized for smaller groups in languages such as Tigrinya, Swahili, and French. The group-model information section provides information to customers about the rights and the obligations of the PES office's customers, unemployment security, integration, and various training paths and employment options. Following the information section, a PES counselor interviews customers personally and draws up a first integration plan for them. During the preparation of the integration plan, the customer is invited to a language skills test or directed to various educational institutions. The new model is not just speeding up the integration time and shorten the waiting time but also is more cost-efficient than the old one (PES 2019). Figures 37 and 38 explain the situation before and after the change in 2016.

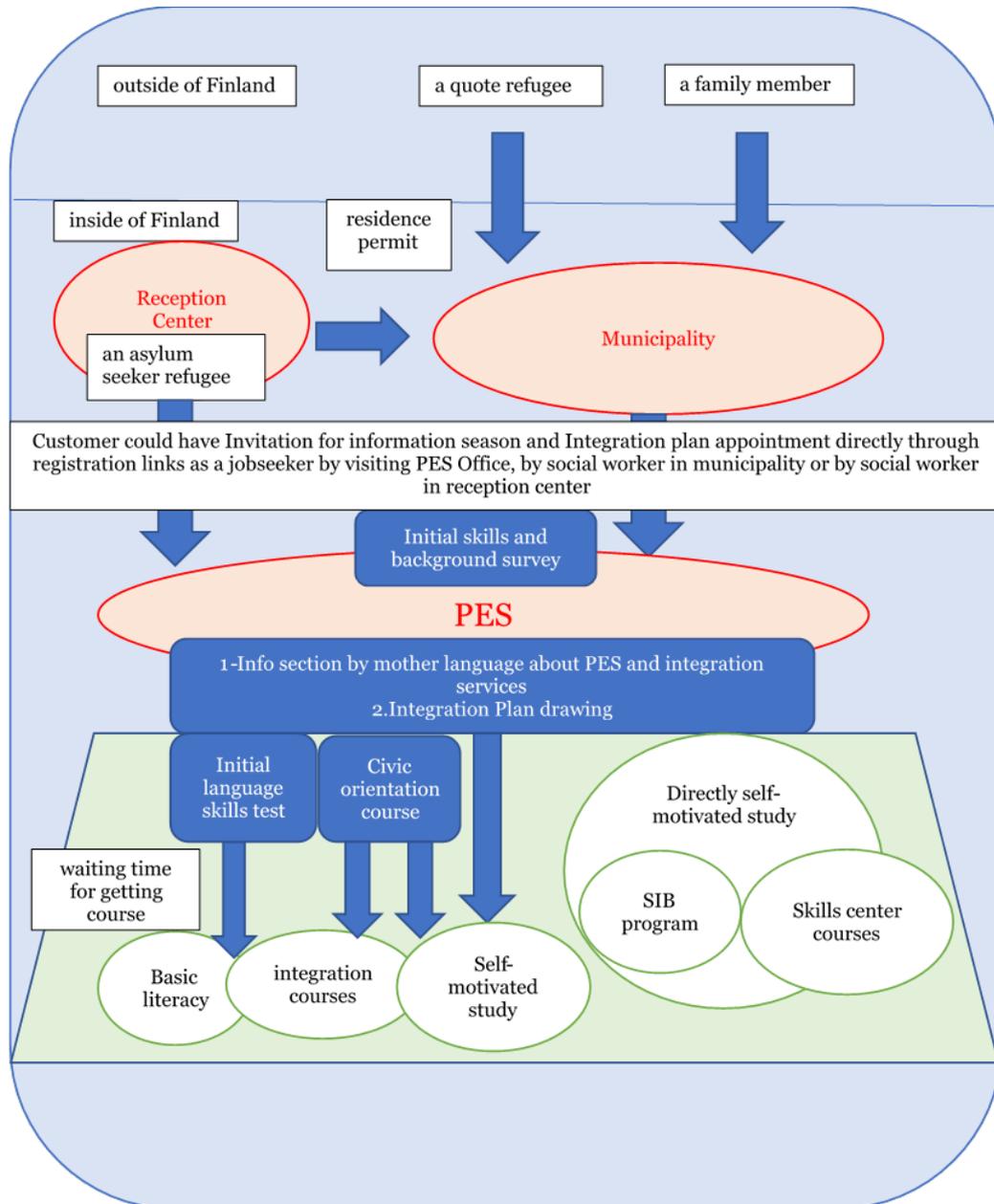
The new model achieved the first and third promise for service, which are included in (the Integration Services Design Report, Impactful ELY Center Program 2016) which was conducted by the Ramboll Group. The service promises were:

Service promise 1: The customer understands service offerings, gets help and advice as needed, and finds the information and services they need.

Services promise 3: The customer gets quality and effective integration support services, and the operation goes smoothly.



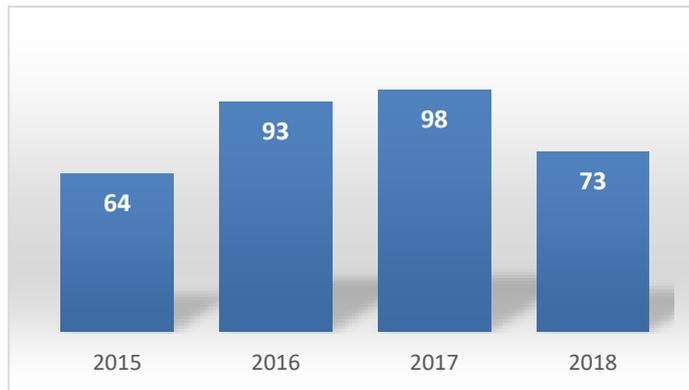
**Figure 37.** The path of PES's new customer through registration steps and integration services in Finland before 4.2016



Source: Researcher analyses based on PES regulations

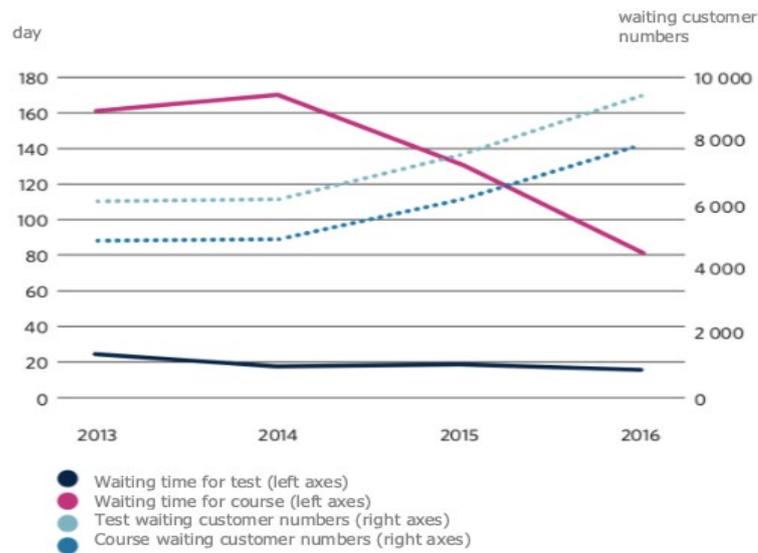
**Figure 38.** The path of PES's new customer through registration steps and integration services in Finland 4/2016-2017

In 2016, the funding for integration training was boosted by 45 percent as the number of immigrants rose. From 2015 to 2018, the state budget plans set aside an average of EUR 82 million per year for integration training services (see Figure 39). Although, the cost of a student's working day fell by roughly 5% from 2015 to 2016, despite course numbers grew (NAOF 2018).



**Figure 39.** Funding booked for integration training in the state budget 2015–2018, million EUR, including tax. Source: NAOF (2018) depending on State budget proposals

Therefore, immigrants are directed to courses more quickly than before; from 2013 to 2017, the waiting time for both the initial assessment test and the training course itself decreased as shown in Figure 40. The waiting time for training was reduced between 2014 to 2016 from just over 160 days to 80 days. However, the waiting times are varied amongst PES Offices, and the set targets have not been achieved in all regions (NAOF 2018).



**Figure 40.** Waiting number and waiting time for initial mapping and training in 2013–2016, NAOF (2018) /education portal data

According to the Act on the Promotion of Integration (FMEE 2010), the initial survey must be started within 2 months of the beginning of the PES Office's client relationship, and the integration plan must be drawn up 2 weeks after the initial survey has been carried out. According to the interviewees, the integration plan is usually made at the PES office at the beginning of the survey, usually on the same visit. According to the Integration Promotion Act (section 14), an immigrant is directed to apply for education or other measures to promote integration and employment within a month of drawing up the integration plan. If calculated according to the above time limits for initial observation and integration plan, the client should enroll in training within 3.5 months (about 105 days) from the commencement as a customer. The State Integration Program for 2016–2019 set the specific objective of accelerating access to integration training, starting no later than 2 months after the initial assessment of language proficiency. So, waiting time according to the Integration Promotion Act (FMEE 2010) is as follows:

Registration as a customer → 2 months → initial assessment (IPA, 10§) → 2 weeks → integration plan (IPA, 13§) → 1 month → Integration course or other measures (IPA, 14§) = 3,5 months = 105 days.

According to education portal data, the time limits required by law to direct to education was reached on average in 2016, but there are significant differences in waiting times between regions. At the end of 2019, the wait time for Helsinki was 68 days, Espoo 63 days, and Vantaa 90 days (PES website 2019).

Another important action for speeding integration is relaxing the language competency requirements of instruction preparing immigrants for vocational education and training and offering additional language teaching during the studies (FMEE 2016a).

The Finnish Government promised to do the following:

1. Lowering barriers between integration training and other types of education and training that follow (FMEE 2016a).
2. Providing more preparatory education for vocational school aimed at a qualification targeted for immigrants, particularly competence-based qualifications (FMEE 2016a).

The Rehabilitation Foundation, the Work Research Centre at the University of Tampere and the Finnish Centre for Pensions have jointly conducted a work-life-related study examining the interventions and processes employed in the core activities of various sectors to prolong working careers. They suggested that language requirements for vocational training should be reviewed. Access to vocational study must also be possible with a lower level of Finnish or Swedish whereby language teaching is a part of training, and a sufficient level of language proficiency is ensured upon graduation (FPMO 2017).

### **3. New integration training models and its effectiveness**

The situation before changing:

The introduction of integration training has been a common European trend. In many countries, such as Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands, and Austria, participation in the programs is compulsory for all immigrants from developing countries. In countries with a mandatory integration program, completion of the program is a condition for obtaining a permanent residence permit. In some countries, in order to obtain a residence permit, a final examination of the program is required as in Denmark. In Finland, integration trainings are at least partly voluntary, and participation in integration trainings is not conditional for obtaining a residence permit (Nekby 2008.)

In practice, immigrant integration training is a form of adult education based on both specific legislation on immigrant integration and guidance from the National Board of Education. The National Board of Education issued its first guidance on the content of integration education as early as 2001. From 2012 onwards, the language teaching of immigrants must follow the guidelines for integration

education and literacy curricula for adult immigrants published by the National Board of Education (2012b). As a rule, integration training is provided as labor market training for adult immigrants.

First of all, as a key integration measure, PES provide integration courses to unemployed migrants. No doubt, those courses have a good impact on integration. However, the current integration training is criticized, and many improvement suggestions were delivered (Bontenbal et al. 2019). In Jokisaari's (2006) study on the period 2001–2003, integration measures appear to be mainly an administrative measure, the importance of which is difficult for the immigrant to understand and to which their integration into Finnish society is of limited value. The situation does not even seem to have changed much between the early 2000s and 2009–2010. According to Jokisaari (2006), the idea of an integration plan as a plan for the life of an immigrant in their new home country did not materialize. Even though the development of the plan and integration measures are interpreted as having a strong interest in supporting the immigrant's self-reliance, integration measures only appear to be directed at the immigrant and do not give them the necessary opportunities to influence their own life in Finland (Eronen et al. 2014).

Also, some researchers declare that integration courses in Finland are one size fits all. Kurki (2018) argues that integration training is non-linear, diverse, and despite claiming to be based on individual needs of immigrants, ignores the fact that integration practically brings together people of various backgrounds like educational backgrounds, reasons for immigration, and residence period in Finland. Director of Education and Training at Aducate Sanna Iskanius said, "The challenge is that many of the new ways of activities are still unknown in Finland. Immigration services are also often not built to promote employment. In Finland, the employment path for immigrants is not yet totally working. There are good and functional entities involved, but a national model of them has not yet been established" (UEF 2015). One of the problems has been the reduction of integration support services so that employment is only planned after language learning and other forms of integration. A long absence from the workplace separates services (FPAC 2018), and the earlier model of integration training was based on the idea that language is to be taught before vocational training (FMEE 2012).

A trend in educational development is the integration of language teaching into vocational training. However, the need to strengthen language skills through language teaching should not be overlooked. There is a need for diversified and more flexible ways of strengthening language skills. The provision for Finnish and Swedish language teaching is ensured in integration education and in all levels and

forms of education (FPMO 2017). Also, Rehabilitation Foundation underlines in its study (a study of the functionality of the measures intended to help immigrants to integrate) to develop language teaching, a more versatile range of language training is needed, and work-related immigrants and international students must be obligated to participate in language training. In addition to the initial services and integration training, services providing support to integration should be provided. By defining them, the support after the provision for support and integration after the integration period can be developed (FPAC 2018).

From a societal point of view, education can be considered cost-effective when it is as close as possible to the needs of those who are integrated. An immigrant's success can be influenced in particular by education and language training geared to their skills and level of competence (Sarvimäki and Hämäläinen 2016). Indeed, flexibility has been sought in integration training through the introduction of part-time, on-the-job, or distance/self-study models. Integration education modules have also been able to link vocational training, entrepreneurship, volunteering, online/distance learning, or other independent study between contact hours (Finnish National Board of Education 2017).

As stated, language learning in Finland is such a key factor in employment that sufficient resources must be directed to it. There must be opportunities to promote language skills even if the integration period has expired or the language level specified in the Integration Act has been reached. There must be groups for learners of different levels and greater use of the opportunities offered by digitalization to provide cost-effective teaching. Language teaching, combined with work, is well-established and effective (FPAC 2018).

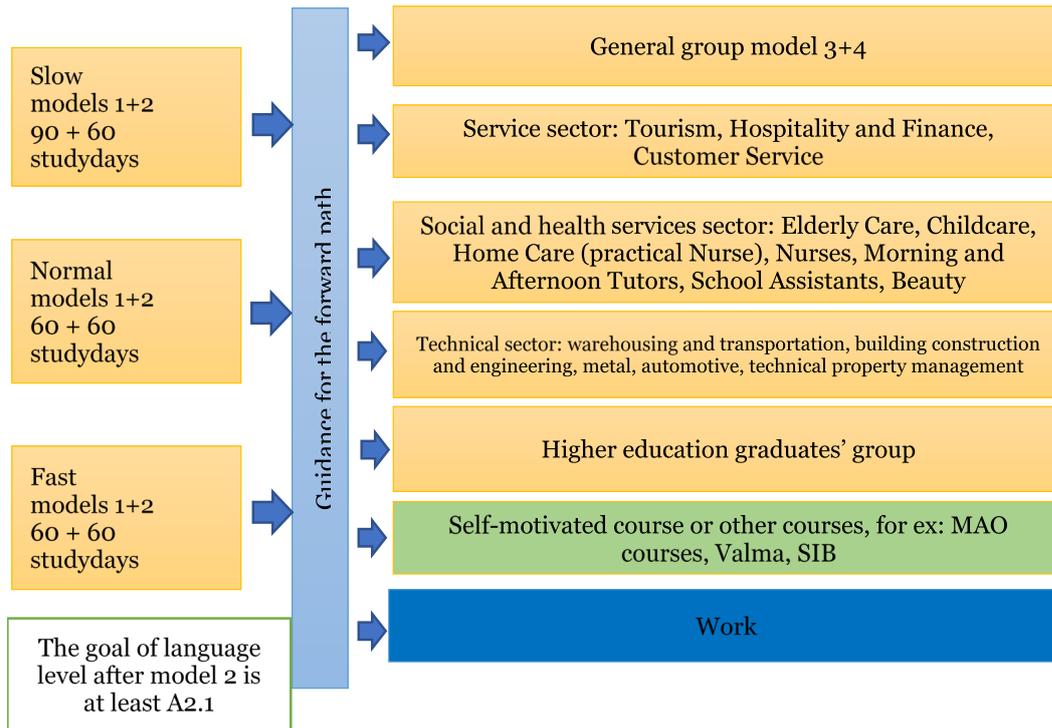
The situation after changing:

Changes were made to integration training in 2016 when the individuality and functionality of integration training was developed in cooperation between the National Board of Education and The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment. The amount has increased, and the quality of current language teaching has been emphasized during competitive bidding. Immigrant integration education has now been reformed in a more work-oriented direction and focused on sectors with the greatest labor shortages with the aim of accelerating the transition to the labor market. With the increase in funding, integration training was started in 2016 with no major delays. In 2016, more work-oriented and early vocational integration training models were adopted and are currently being implemented. The starting point of the new implementation models has been to accelerate the path to work and postgraduate studies by linking modules according to the target group, such as to vocational studies, entrepreneurship, volunteering,

online/distance learning, and other independent study periods between contact hours. (FPAC 2018; FMEE 2016a; NAOF 2018). “This is definitely an improvement to a one-size-fits-all integration design” (Bontenbal et al. 2019).

The current model in the capital area has undergone changes from 2016 until it reached the current model in 2019. Before 2016, students studied for about a year in integration courses (4 Finnish language models) and were divided into groups based on speed of progression (ELY-center for Uusimaa (2019)).

After 2016 and during the experimental transitional period of the change, courses were divided into two phases. The first phase was divided into three types of language courses: slow, normal, and fast. During the first phase, a student could study first and second Finnish language course models. The second phase is divided into five types of courses or groups and independent courses or other options: general group for customers without a clear professional orientation/plan, a higher education graduates’ group for customers who have at least a bachelor’s degree with a level of Finnish of at least A2.1 +. Customers are oriented toward tasks or further education that require a strong command of the Finnish language, professional groups for the social and health services sector, professional groups for the services sector, and professional groups for the technology sector. In this phase, a student could study third and fourth Finnish language course models with vocational orientation as illustrated before. Figure 41 illustrates experimental transitional period courses.



**Figure 41.** Integration training models in the Helsinki capital region 2018.

Source: ELY-center for Uusimaa (2018) and Owl Group (2018)

The last version of the new model was delivered in 2019. Figure 42 illustrates integration training models in the Helsinki capital region in 2019. Integration courses are divided into three phases: The first phase is an orientation phase, which is divided into three types of integration courses: civic orientation courses by mother language (15 study days); this module is implemented in Arabic/Somali. The second course is a strengthening Latin alphabet competence course (50 study days), and the third course is a fast path/working life orientation course in English (20 study days).

The second phase is the initial phase, which is divided into three types of language courses: slow, normal, and fast. During this phase, students could study the first and second Finnish language course models.

The third phase is the final phase that is divided into four types of courses and other option: general group for customers without a clear professional orientation/plan, a higher education graduates' group for customers who have at least a bachelor's degree with a level of Finnish at least A2.1 +. Customers are oriented toward tasks or further education that require a strong command of the Finnish language, professional groups for the social and health services sector, a

professional group for the services sector, and last professional groups for the technology sector. In this phase, student could study third and fourth Finnish language course model with vocational orientation as illustrated before, Figure 42 illustrates experimental transitional period courses including Finnish language and communication skills as well as work and social studies. Also, language training, which lasts for two to three weeks, will be a work placement during which practical language skills are developed.

# Integration training in the Helsinki capital region 2019

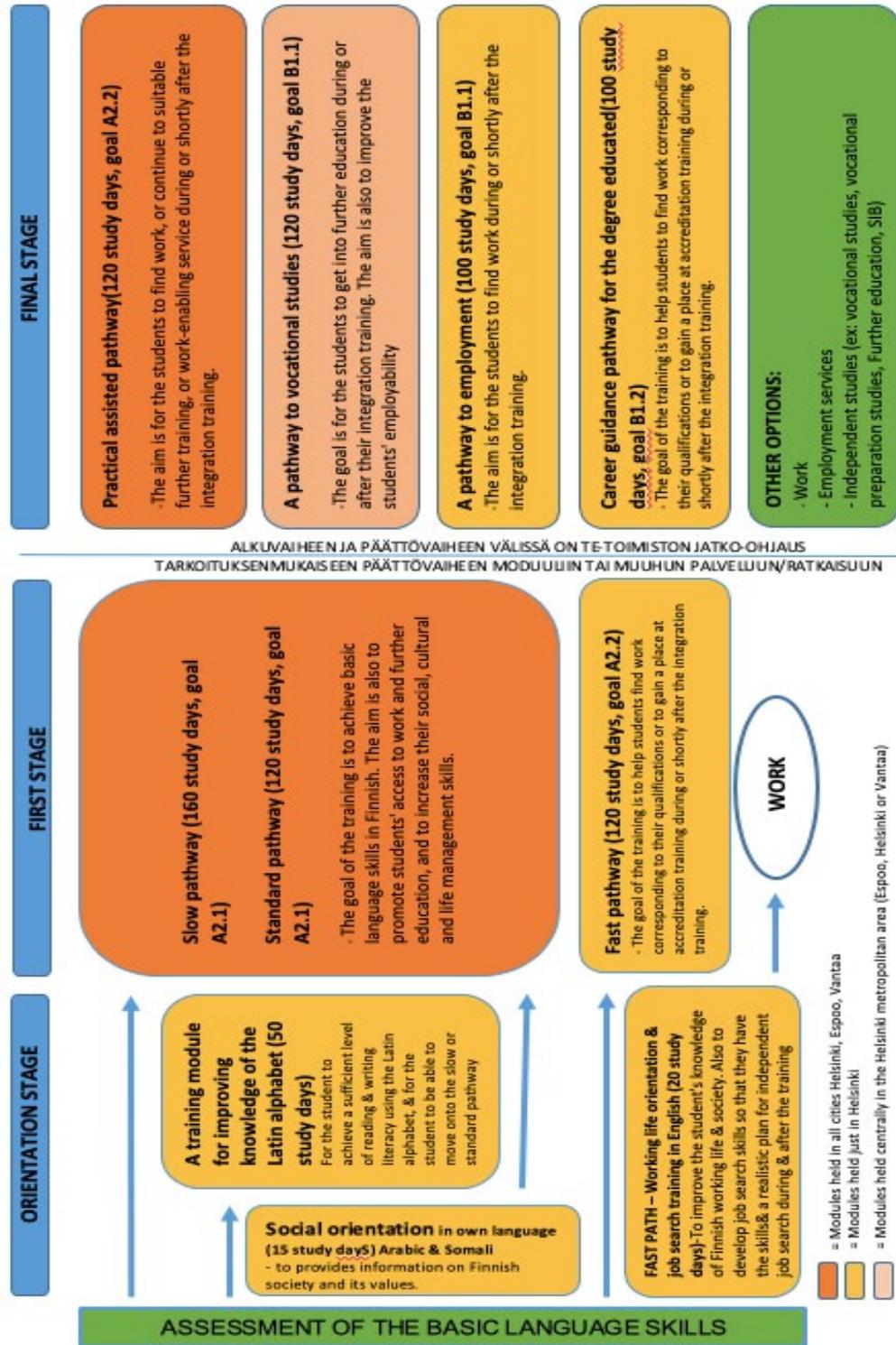


Figure 42. Integration training models in the Helsinki capital region 2019  
Source: ELY-center for Uusimaa (2019)

Results of new model:

Here, we will introduce results of the new model depending on study of integration training models in the Turku and capital area in April 2018 (Owal Group 2018) but before introducing results it is worth seeing reviews of teachers of integration courses, PES officers, employers and students.

The perspective of teachers and education officers: There is a wide range of views on the functionality and appropriateness of the new model. The overwhelming satisfaction is with the fact that integration education in general has finally begun to be reformed more strongly. Likewise, the majority will consider the model chosen to be at least correct in terms of its starting point and content. However, few are yet fully satisfied with its implementation.

PES officers' point of view: PES officers do not see the changes very much. In some cases, communication has intensified. Some feel that the guidance of their clients has been facilitated and think that this is due to the early reflection of their professional direction as more emphasis has been placed on guidance plans during training. The reform is not generally considered to be complete but still an improvement of the old way of organizing integration training.

Concerns were raised about the position of vulnerable students, students struggling with different concomitant problems, and, in principle, those who find it harder to find employment. In some interviews, the reform was seen to better serve those who would otherwise do better.

PES officers who take responsibility for the integration training for PES services were much more critical of the reform. The increase in the workload, the practical organization of the new model in the training unit, and the estimates of the benefits of the model were all discussed in the interviews. In this context, it is good to keep in mind that the amount of work involved in training generally increased because of the increased number of clients not only because of the professional modules of integration training.

Employers' point of view: Interviews with employers did not reveal any significant observations on trainees regarding the change. Of the seven employers interviewed, only a few had any experience of working with more than one training provider. As the implementation varies from one training provider to another, the views of employers in the capital area cannot be generalized.

One in three interviewed employers with previous experience of integration training trainees identified differences in past implementations. An employer said

that the current approach to integration training focuses more on apprenticeships rather than language training, which is a relief for the workplace. A longer internship period of 3-8 weeks gives more to both the student and the employer. Also, trainer communication is much more active than before. Other interviewees either did not see a difference or had no previous experience.

Students' point of view: A total of 58 responses were received through a student questionnaire. The survey results mainly provide an overview of student satisfaction.

Figure 43 shows almost half of the students feel that the education corresponds to their previous work experience or educational background. Estimates of training are quite positive. However, about one 20% said they were not satisfied with the guidance they received. Content estimates are even lower. A large proportion (83%) said that professional goals and interests were taken into account in training and that integration training had a clear purpose.



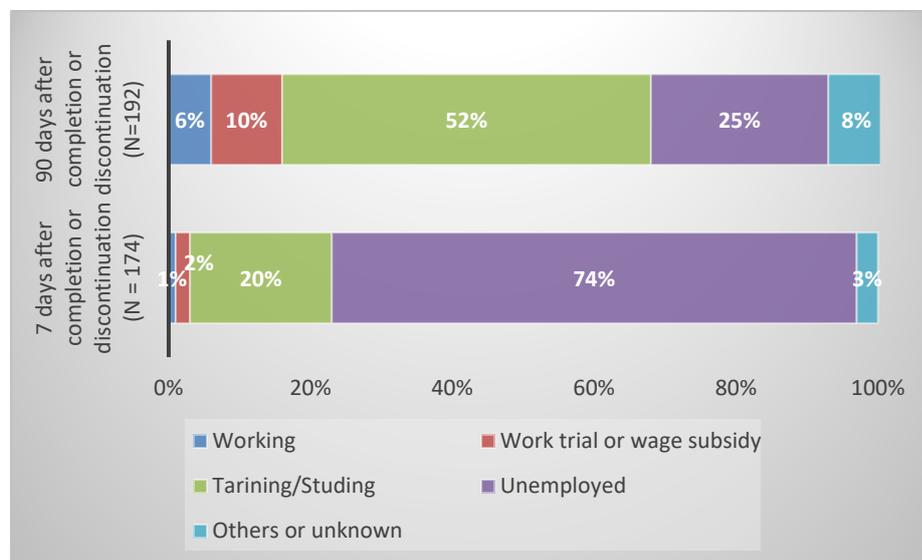
**Figure 43.** Students' assessment of the guidance they have received and the relevance of education to their prior qualification and interests (Owal Group 2018)

Placement after training:

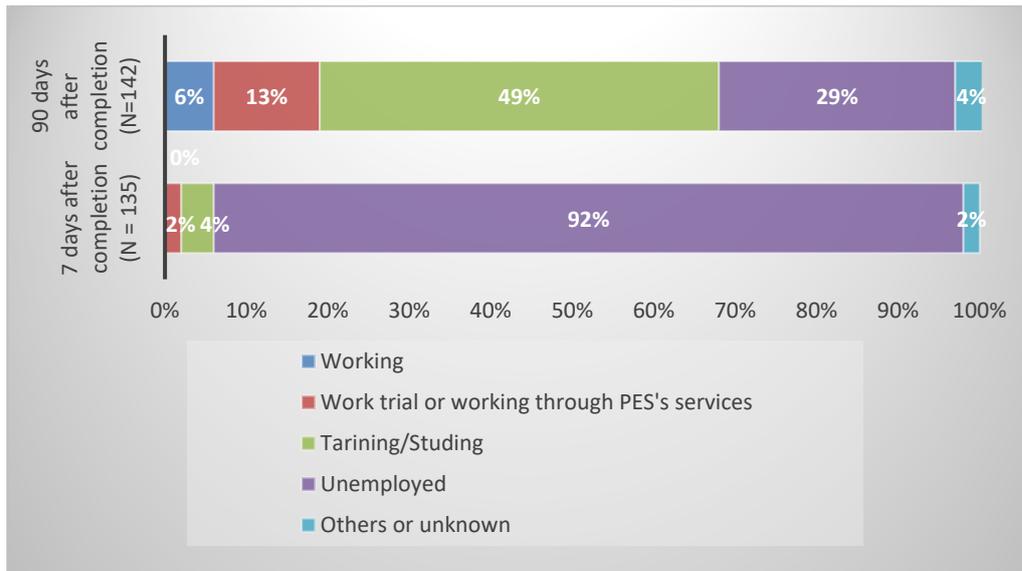
Placement after training was reviewed 7 and 90 days after completion or discontinuation of training. Three months' effectiveness is the standard for monitoring PES administration measures, and the situation immediately after the

training is also interesting. Because of possible recording delays, the after-training situation was reviewed after a week. The survey was conducted for all kinds of information needs of all students who started their education but also only those who completed their education. The results are consistent. The placement alternatives were categorized into five categories: (a) working (in the general labor market), (b) in work trial or wage subsidy, (c) in training, (d) unemployed, and (e) other or unknown.

Three months after completion or discontinuation, about half of the students in the capital area had some other education. A quarter were unemployed, and 15–20% of students were employed through PES services or employed, see Figure 44 and 45.



**Figure 44.** Placement 7 days and 3 months after the end of integration training (%) to students who started their education. (Owal Group 2018)



**Figure 45.** Placement 7 days and 3 months after the end of integration training (%) to students who completed their education. (Owal Group 2018)

From the point of view of placement, the introduction of new models has not had any effect. Although the data have been partly collected and analyzed in different ways, the placement of graduates in the Helsinki metropolitan area after 3 months is almost entirely consistent with the observations made earlier on the effectiveness of integration training in Uusimaa.

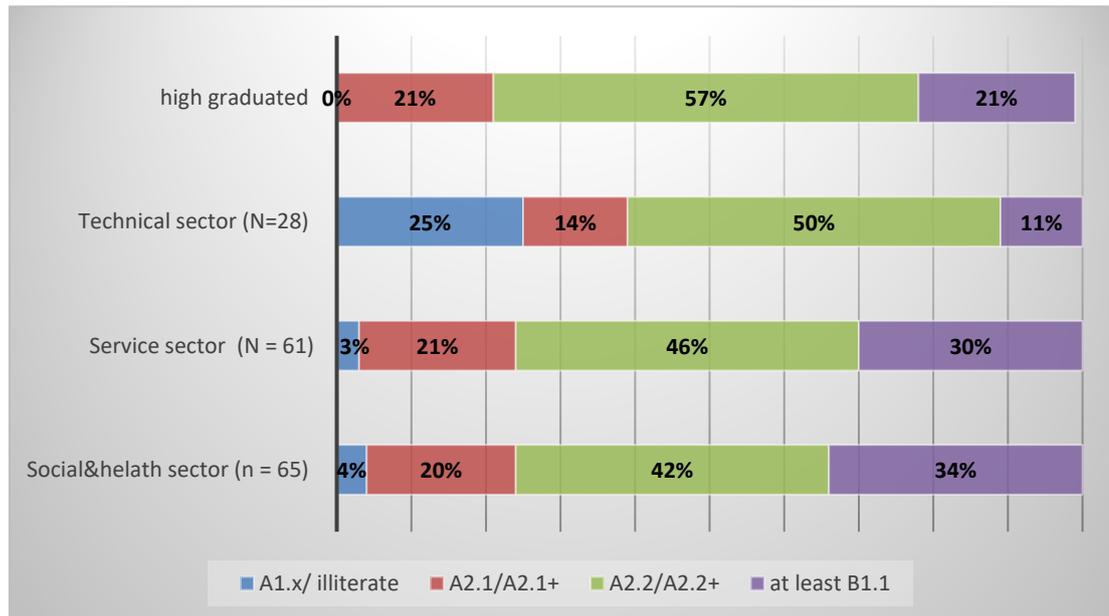
Language proficiency:

The initial measurement of language proficiency was made before the start of the training and of the achieved proficiency at the end of the training. The level achieved was examined by education profile and divided into four descriptive categories:

- 1) below A2.1
- 2) A2.1-A2.1 +
- 3) A2.2-A2.2 +
- 4) At least B1.1.

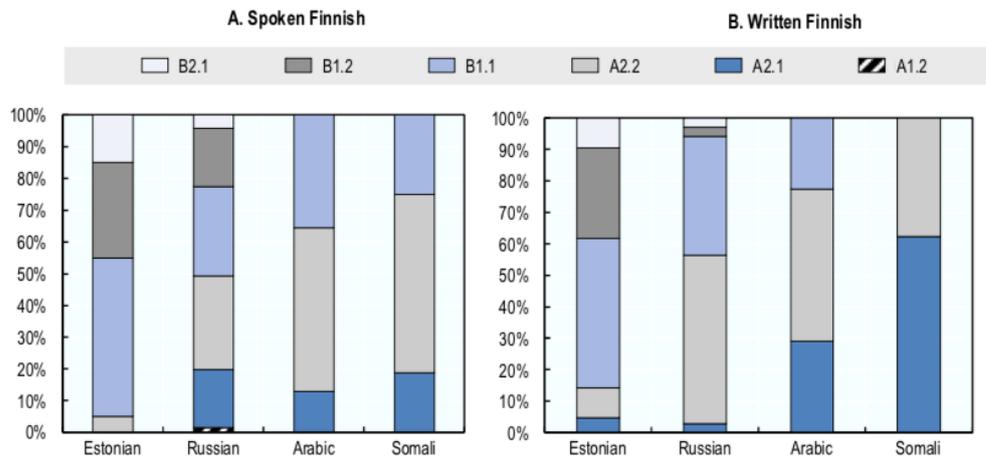
Most graduates in the capital area have achieved an A2 level in language skills around 40–60% depending on education. Only about 10–30% of students have acquired the required language proficiency level B1.1 or higher Owal Group (2018).

Professional models should already have a baseline of at least A2.1, but after taking models 20–40% of students have reached +A2.1, so this could be considered relatively significant see Figure 46.



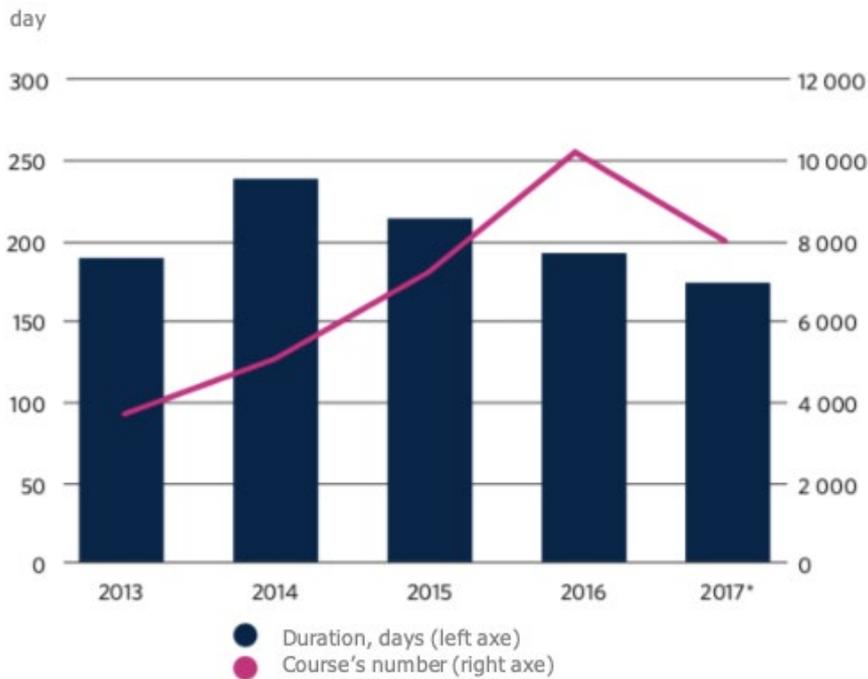
**Figure 46.** Language proficiency level of graduates in the Helsinki capital region, %. (Owal Group 2018)

It's important to mention here that B1.1 is still the grade necessary for entry into much vocational training. Also, language performance tends to vary with the language of one's mother tongue. Indeed, data from one language training provider suggest that while the majority of those from Estonia achieve the target grade of B1.1 at the end of their language training, those speaking Arabic or Somali as their first language were most likely to attain only A2.2 see Figure 47 (OECD 2018).



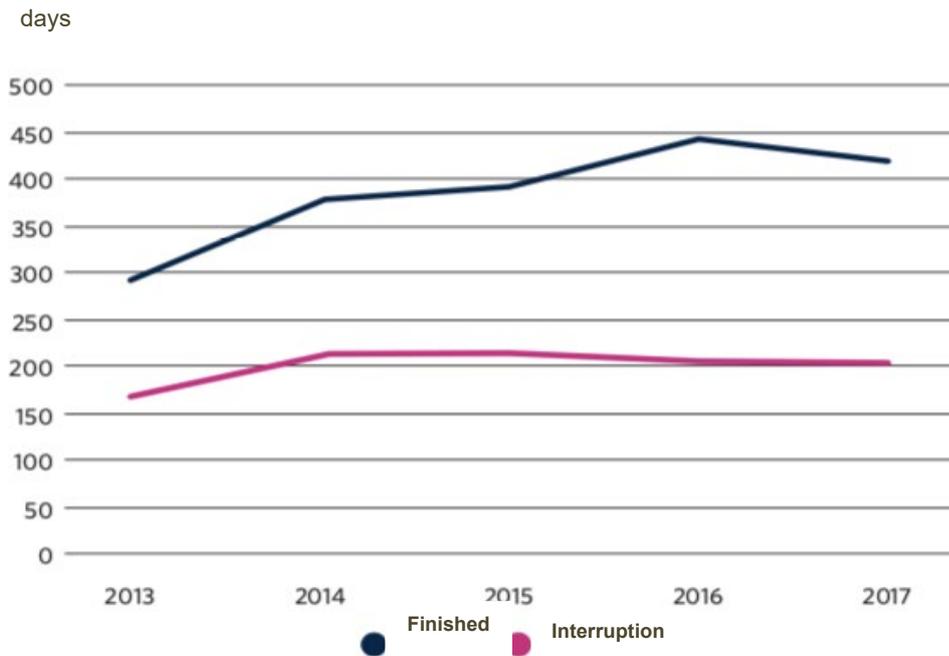
**Figure 47.** Post-language course language performance by mother tongue. (Testipiste data)

According to the Education Portal Database (Koulutusportti), training courses have become shorter (see Figure 48), but the time used by immigrants for training has simultaneously increased (see Figure 49).



**Figure 48.** Duration and number of completed integration trainings (PES training and independent training) treated at the training gate in 2013–2017 by year of completion of training. (NAOF (2018)/Education Portal Database)

Figure 49 shows the total duration of integration training for participants who finished either completion or interruption between 2013 and 2017. For the total duration, participants are summed up for each separate period from the first training period started to the last. The time spent on training has been constantly increasing. On average, less than 450 days, about 1 year and 3 months, were spent on training for participants who completed training in 2016. The average time spent on interrupted training was 200 days from 2014–2016



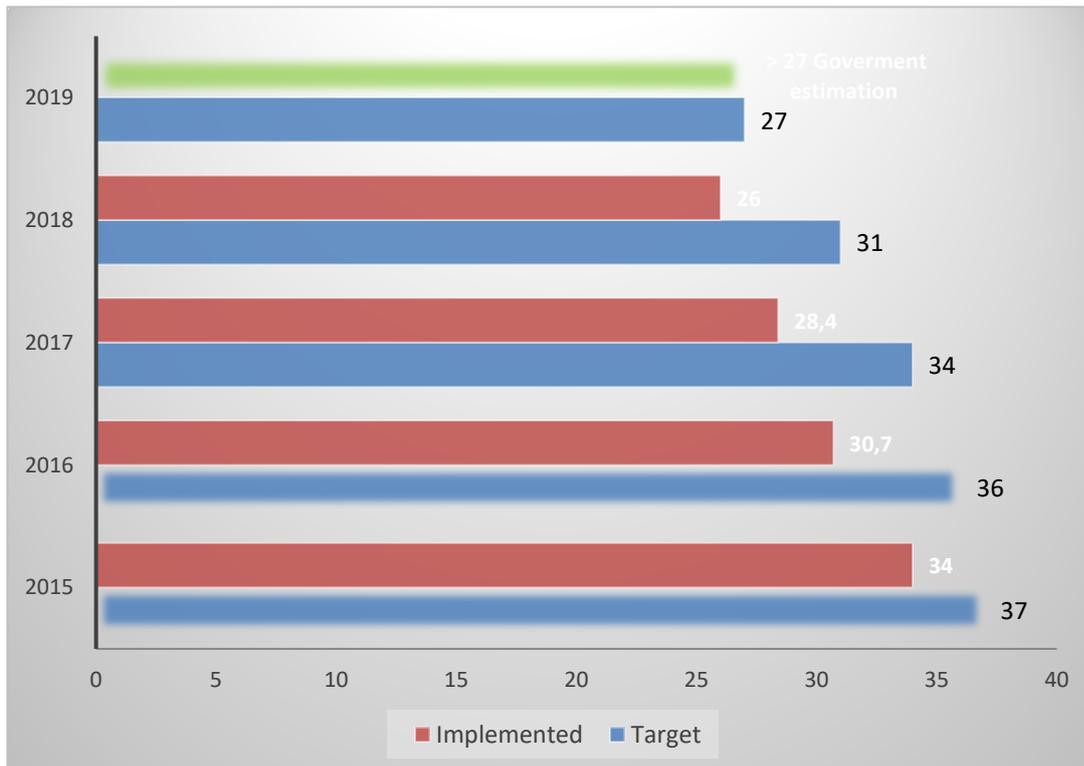
**Figure 49.** Average duration of integration training (PES integration training and independent training) in days for those who finished and interrupted training between 2013 and 2016. (NAOF (2018)/Education Portal Database)

The Finnish Economic Affairs and Employment Ministry keeps track of how many integration training participants are employed or in further training 3 months after finishing their course using employment service data based on a customer register. Table 13 and Figure 50 illustrate that the Finnish government has succeeded in reaching annual targets of integration training effectiveness with the unemployment rate after integration training participation (follow-up at 3 months).

**Table 13.** A comparative table of (target/implemented) effectiveness of integration training/unemployment rate after integration training participation (follow-up at 3 months) for the Finnish government from 2015–2019. (2015 and 2016 no target 2019 estimation was >27.)

Year	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Target	no was goal	no was goal	34	31	27
Implemented	34	30.7	28,4	26	<27 estimated

Source: designed by Researcher depending on Finnish state budget proposal for years 2017–2019, <https://budjetti.vm.fi/indox/index.jsp>



Source: designed by researcher depending on Finnish state budget proposal for the years 2017–2019

**Figure 50.** Comparative figure between target/implemented effectiveness of integration training/unemployment rate after integration training participation (follow-up at 3 months) for the Finnish government from 2015–2019 (2015 and 2016 no target 2019 estimation was > 27).

Also, to promote the speedy employment of immigrants, a social impact bond (SIB) investing project aiming to promote integration has been launched in September 2016 in the Uusima region and has expanded into other regions in Finland, (Finnish Government 2018).

The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment introduced optional fast-track training to find work and learn the Finnish language, which was administered by Epikus Oy together with PES offices and service providers. The training involves learning the Finnish language for 3 to 6 months and when the level of the Finnish language is sufficient to start an internship leading to employment, but the job search continues if necessary (Kotosib 2019). Most workplaces were in labor shortage sectors such as restaurants, cleaning etc. But some also were in academic positions (FMEE 2020). A total of 2,217 immigrants in Koto-SIB, of which 1,034 were employed. Hämäläinen comments about it (FMEE 2020)

*The number of immigrants participating in the experiment was not as large as we initially anticipated due to the large number of young people in the target group. It makes more sense for young people to obtain a qualification in Finland before applying for work. In addition, the target group was expanded to include all immigrants who seek international protection in Finland. The experiment showed that the project was best suited for immigrants who have lived in Finland for several years.*

#### Employment situation in Finland and public employment services provided by PES

Employment situation:

In general, the immigrants' employment situation is unstable, with high unemployment rates, short-term, part-time, shift and black-market jobs, which rarely match their actual qualifications and work experience (Kurki (2019); Valtonen 2001; Forsander 2004; Wahlbeck 2007; Tuori 2009); 13% of employed people in Finland, 12% in the EU, and 22% for third-country nationals work in part-time jobs. Also, 14% of employed people in Finland, 17% in EU citizens, and 26% in third-country nationals work in fixed-term employment, and in general, their income levels remain lower than locals and other nationals. Besides that, migrants suffer from hidden unemployment (who are jobless, but official unemployment figures do not include them) more than the general population (OECD 2019).

Table 14 shows high-educated immigrants in Finland are more likely to be unemployed than their native-born peers by 7%. But low educated unemployment rates are almost the same for both.

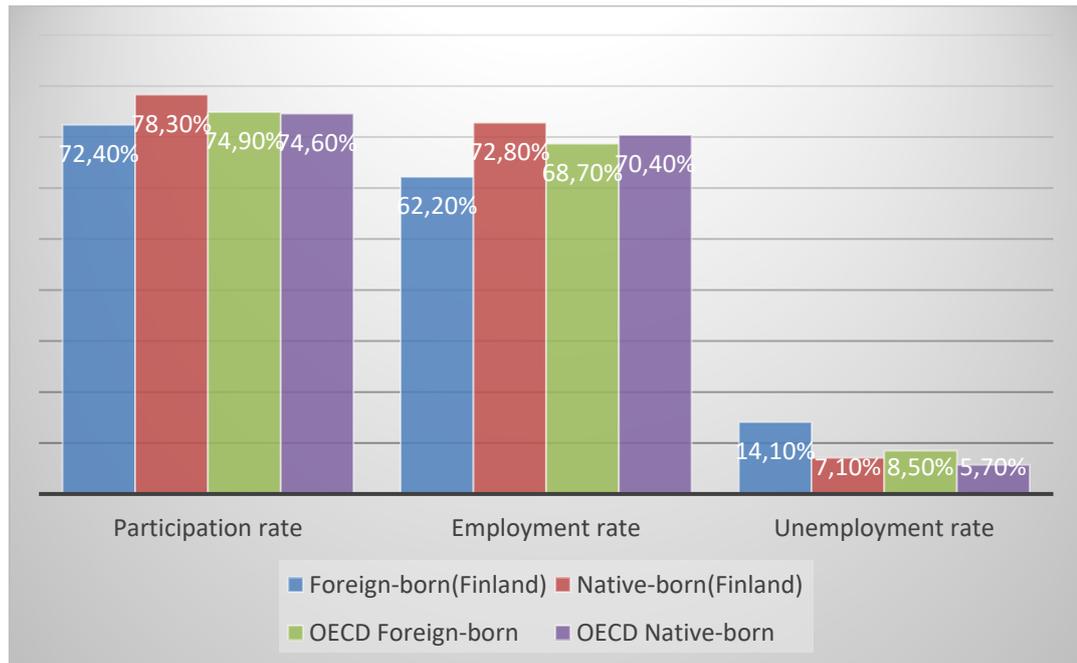
**Table 14.** Unemployment rates Percentages of 15- to 64-year-olds, 2017

15-64		Low-educated		Highly educated	
Foreign-born	Native-born	Foreign-born	Native-born	Foreign-born	Native-born
16,0	8,3	19,1	18,5	11,8	4,8

Source OECD (2017)

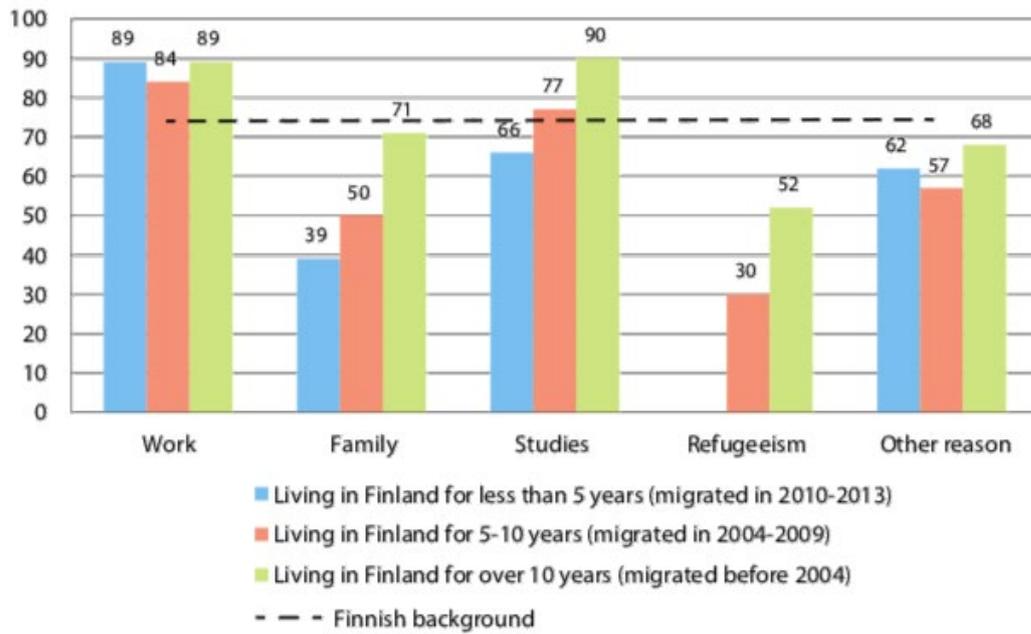
In 2018, The most OECD countries experienced positive changes in the results of the labor market for immigrants. Between 2017 and 2018, the unemployment rate dropped from 9.4% to 8.7% and the employment rate improved +1% compared to 2017, but these improvements did not include migrants from the Middle East (refugee exporting countries) region of origin for humanitarian migrants) more than over one in every five migrants from middle East was unemployed, a trend that had not altered since 2013. Previous OECD research has found that the labor market results of refugees and other humanitarian migrants are poorer than those of other migrants (OECD 2019).

Figure 51 shows that, across the OECD, native- and foreign-born employment rates and participation rates are very similar. Contrastingly, in Finland, the migrants' employment rate is 10% less than the natives' rate, and the migrants' participation rate is 6% less than the natives' one. The foreign-born unemployment rate (14%) is twice as high as for the native-born (7%).



**Figure 51.** Comparing labor market outcomes between Finland and OECD countries 2018. (OECD 2019)

A refugee background reduces the likelihood of being employed for more than 300 days in the follow-up year by 6% for all migrant job seekers and 4% in the follow-up population compared to job seekers who have moved for family reasons (Aho and Mäkiäho 2017). Half of the refugee population living in the country for more than 10 years is employed. Residence time has the greatest impact on employment with a refugee background. Only a very small number of those who were residents for less than 5 years were employed in 2014, but half of those living for more than 10 years were employed, as Figure 52 shows. In the case of migrant workers, the employment rate is already very good and will remain the same regardless of the period of residence. Many of those who have moved for study purposes leave after completing their studies, but for those who have stayed in Finland for more than 10 years, the employment rate is also very good (UTH 2014).

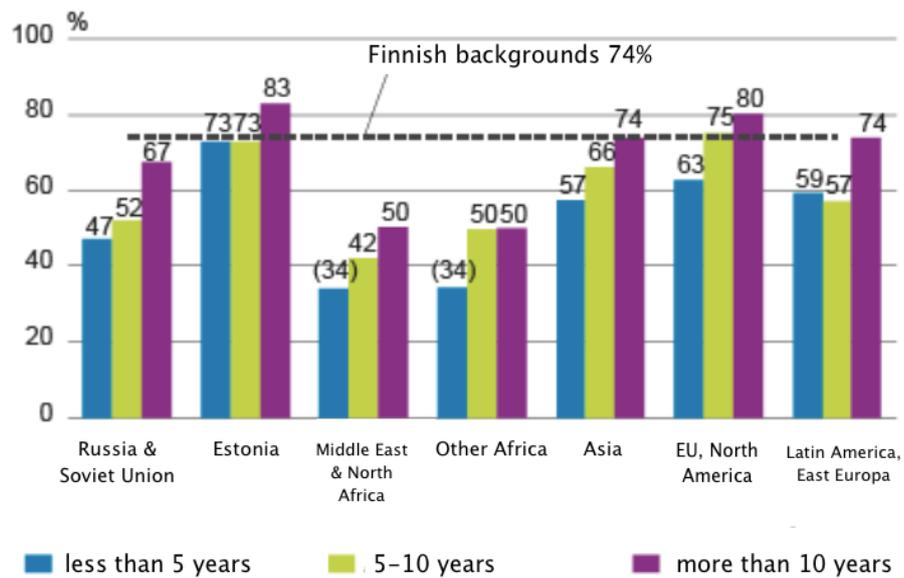


\*Data on the employment rates of immigrants with a refugee background who have lived in the country for less than five years is unreliable due to the small number of observations.

Source: Survey on work and well-being among persons of foreign origin 2014, Statistics Finland

**Figure 52.** Employment rate by length of residence and reason for immigrating in 2014.

According to analysis by the Finnish Employment and the Economy Ministry, the development during the years 2000–2010 seems to be in line with the results of the UTH survey of 2014 (Eronen et al. 2014). According to the results, see Figure 53, the employment rate of citizens of the Middle East and North Africa who moved to Finland in 2000 had increased from 20% to 40% in 10 years. For the rest of Africa, the FMEE report found an increase in the employment rate from 36% to 40%.



Source: Survey on work and well-being among persons of foreign origin 2014, Statistics Finland

**Figure 53.** Employment rate of foreigners (20-64 years) by background and residence time 2014

In terms of the scientific performance of immigrants, young people with an immigrant background perform significantly worse than native-born people. Table 15 shows that in 2017, the ESL (early leavers from education and training) rate for foreign-born was over twice as high as for the native-born (7.9%), and just 27% of foreign-born people obtained higher education (Eurostat 2017).

**Table 15.** Place of birth and education background in Finland, 2017.

		Finland		EU average	
		2014	2017	2014	2017
Early leavers from education and training (age 18-24)	Native-born	9,1%	7,9%	10,4%	9,6%
	Foreign-born	19,5%	15,2%	20,2%	19,4%
Tertiary educational attainment (age 30-34)	Native-born	46,9%	46,7%	31%	27,1%
	Foreign-born	31%	27,1%	34,3%	36,3%

Source: Eurostat (2017)

In Uusimaa, the share of foreign-language speakers and foreigners among unemployed job seekers is by far the highest in mainland Finland. In the past, foreigners' and foreign-language speakers' unemployment have fallen at a slower rate than overall unemployment, but now the decline has stopped and turned to slight growth. In July, the number of unemployed job seekers abroad had grown by 0.9% over last year (FMEE 2019).

### Employment services provided by PES

PES services for job seekers are varied. In this section, we highlight the most popular services:

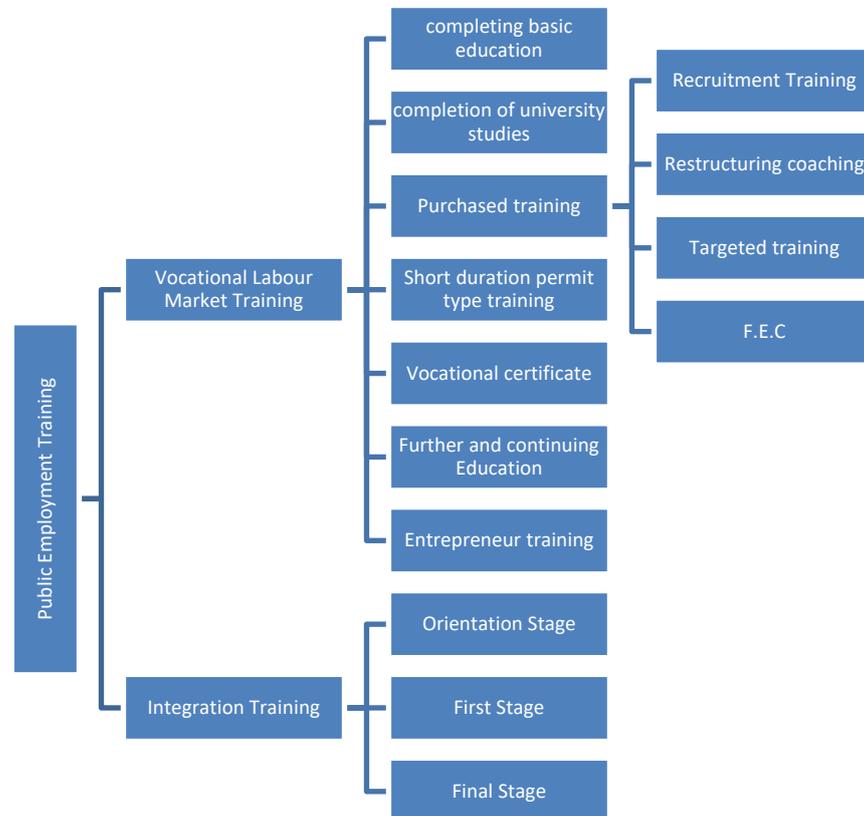
#### 1. Labor market training

The aim of labor market training, as introduced by the Public Employment and Business Service Act (2012), is to improve adults' professional skills, their chances of finding a job, and their capacity to work as entrepreneurs, as well as to increase the availability of a skilled labor force.

Unemployed or worker at danger of losing their work who have finished their required schooling are eligible for labor market training (PES Office 2019). Labor

market training is divided into two distinct sub-categories: integration courses and vocational training see Figure 54.

### Vocational labor market training



Source: adapted from the JTYP Application Guide as mentioned in (Sundvall 2017)

**Figure 54.** Labor market training and its various types at the Uusimaa Employment and Economic Development Office

#### 2. Jobseeker's independent studies supported by unemployment benefit

Improving the adult's vocational skills and the possibility of finding or keeping a job and enhancing the availability of a skilled labor force are the main aim of supporting a jobseeker's independent studies as mentioned in Act on Public Employment and Business Service (2012).

Jobseeker's independent studies is intended for the unemployed customer, who is age 25 or over and aims to complete a vocational, a further or specialist vocational qualification, or a bachelor's or a master's degree at a university or a higher

education degree at a university or a university of applied sciences (PES Office 2019). Although there are no time limits on how long students must study, the unemployment benefit to support studies can only be granted for a maximum of 24 months per degree. There is one exception, which is that basic education support can be a maximum of 48 months (PES Office 2019).

Independent study may be arranged according to the Act on Public Employment and Business Service or the Act on the Promotion of Integration of Immigrants. A jobseeker receiving unemployment benefits has the right to receive an expense allowance to compensate for travel and other expenses incurred from participating in independent studies referred to in the Act on the Promotion of Integration of Immigrants and the Act on Public Employment and Business Service. Changes started on January 1, 2017. An expense allowances paid no more for independent study referred to in the Act on Public Employment and Business Service (2012).

### 3. Work tryouts

Work tryouts as referred to in the act on public employment and business service (2012):

The PES office may steer jobseekers to do a training tryout with the aim of examining vocational choices and career options or with aiming to support his returning to the labor market. A work tryout at a workplace may help a jobseeker get their foot in the door when returning to the job market and give them an opportunity to impress the employer with their skills and motivation (PES Office 2019). In 2017, 2,575 foreign-born job seekers undertook work tryouts, accounting for 24% of all participants (OECD 2018).

### 4. A wage subsidy

A wage subsidy is a grant to companies from PES office to promote the employment of unemployed jobseeker; this grant will help employers to cover pay costs of salary by around 30% for a max of 6 months, 40% for a max of 12 months, or 50% for a max of 12/24 months depending on the unemployment period and situation of jobseeker (Act on Public Employment and Business Service 2012).

### 5. Startup grants

PES office aims to encourage new businesses and boost employment by giving startup grants. The grant provides an entrepreneur with money for the period it takes to get their firm up and operating but no more than 12 months. The start-up grant amount is 32.40 € /day (PES Office 2019).

The PES Office provides a startup grant for the applicant only if the establishing enterprise is a suitable option to employ themselves.

## 6. Apprenticeship training

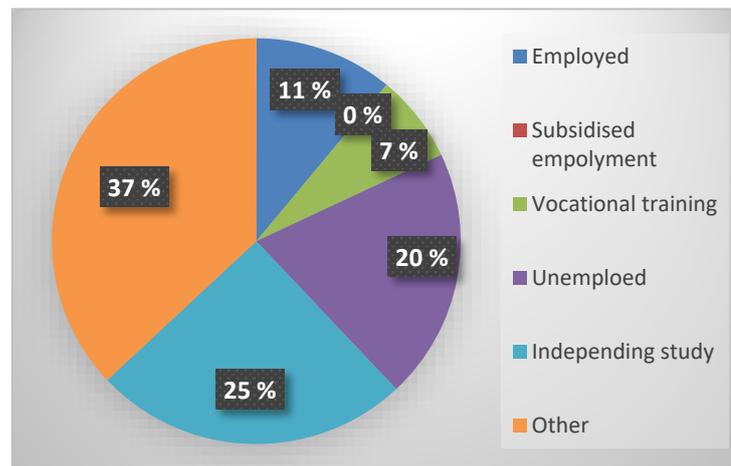
Apprenticeship training is a way to get a vocational certificate and gaining new skills, such as through completing qualifying modules. The most practical method of learning is to do it at work in a real-world setting with real-world scenarios.

An employer and a student aged 15 or older could contract a fixed-term agreement to learn the profession in the workplace while also attending classes at an educational institution (PES Office 2019).

The effectiveness of labor market measures provided by PES:

In 2017, around 40,000 non-Finnish citizens completed public employment services (Tuomaala 2019). The Ghanaians, Spanish, Romanians, Gambians, and Italians have the best employment rate. Citizens of these countries have a higher employment rate than Finns. The weakest employment outcomes were for Eritreans, Sudanese, Syrians, and Iraqis (Tuomaala 2019).

In 2017, foreign-born job seekers registered with the PES undertook integration/labor market training and around 11% of participants entered employment 3 months after completing the integration courses; see Figure 55 (Tuomaala 2019).



**Figure 55.** The percentage of participant placement 3 months after completing integration training 2017. (Tuomaala 2019)

However, participation in future activation and training programs is usually predicated on achieving a level of language that few participants attain, so many

integration trainings participants serve as both the first and last step toward integration. For many, the gap between their abilities and the job market is too great, and nearly two out of every five people who complete integration training end up unemployed or out of the labor market completely. Migrants who complete integration training without gaining sufficient language skills to participate in future PES activities are especially exposed to be outside of the work life (OECD 2018).

In refugee cases, following the end of integration training (usually two-three years after arrival), less than 2% of participants moved directly into employment in 2015. Indeed, the majority of job seekers moved into vocational training or further study.

In this section, we discuss the latest studies about the effectiveness of labor market services and measures provided by PES to Finnish foreign customers. We analyzed and measured the effectiveness depending on four points:

1. The rate of employment 3 months after ending an employment service spell.
2. The rate of unemployment 3 months after ending an employment service spell.
3. The rate of employment after ending an employment service spell for 5 years.
4. Quality and adequacy of public employment services.

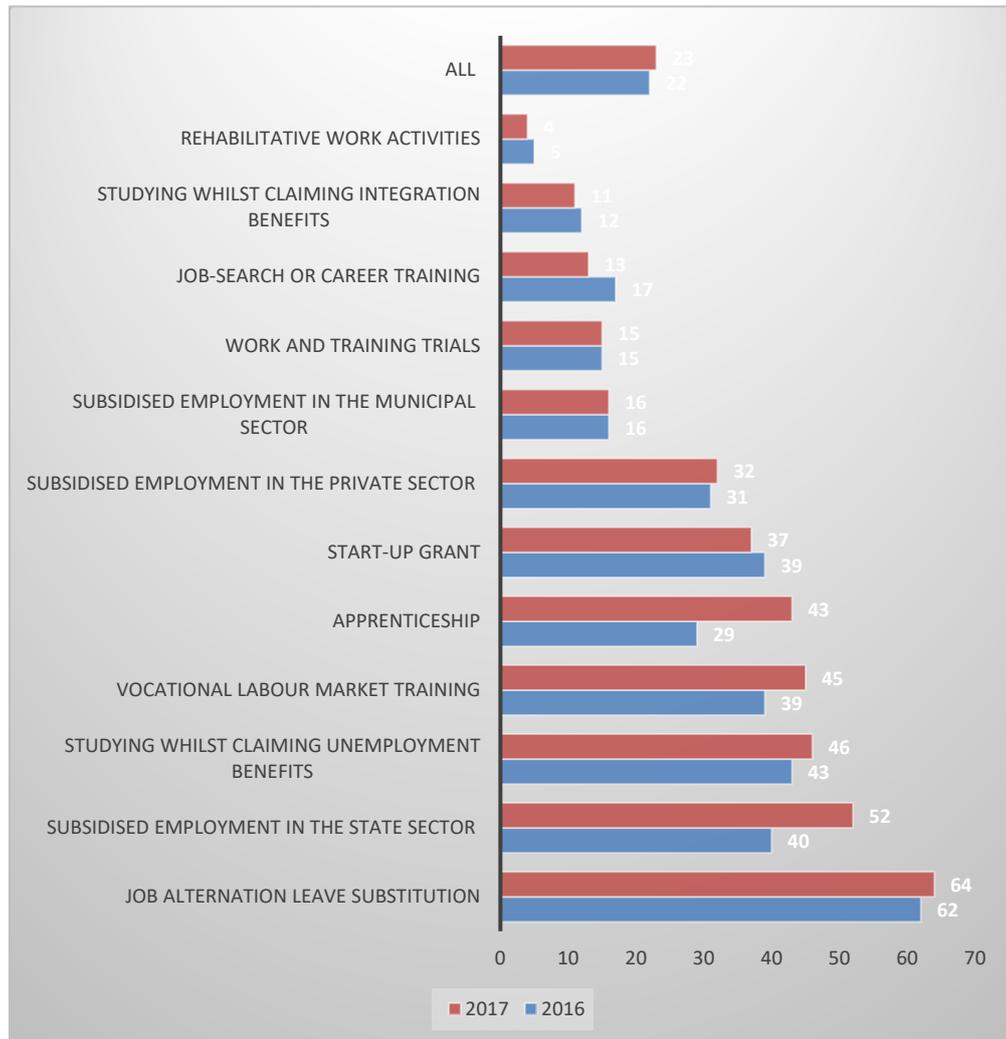
1. The rate of employment 3 months after ending an employment service spell:

**Tuomaala (2019):**

The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Labor monitors the effectiveness of labor market policy services by following up on the labor market status of its participants after 3 or 6 months after the end of service participation. Where the following services are monitored: subsidized employment; labor market training; job-search or career training; work and training try-outs; job alternation leave substitution; rehabilitative work activities; and independent education supported by unemployment benefits.

In 2016, 22% employed within 3 months after labor market services participation; it reached 23% in 2017. So, the percentage of placements in the open labor market grew significantly. As Figure 56 shows, job alternation leave substitution, wage subsidized in the state job, and independent education supported by

unemployment benefits are the most effective services. Correspondingly, rehabilitative work activities, studying by integration benefits and job-search or career training are the least effective in employment outcomes.

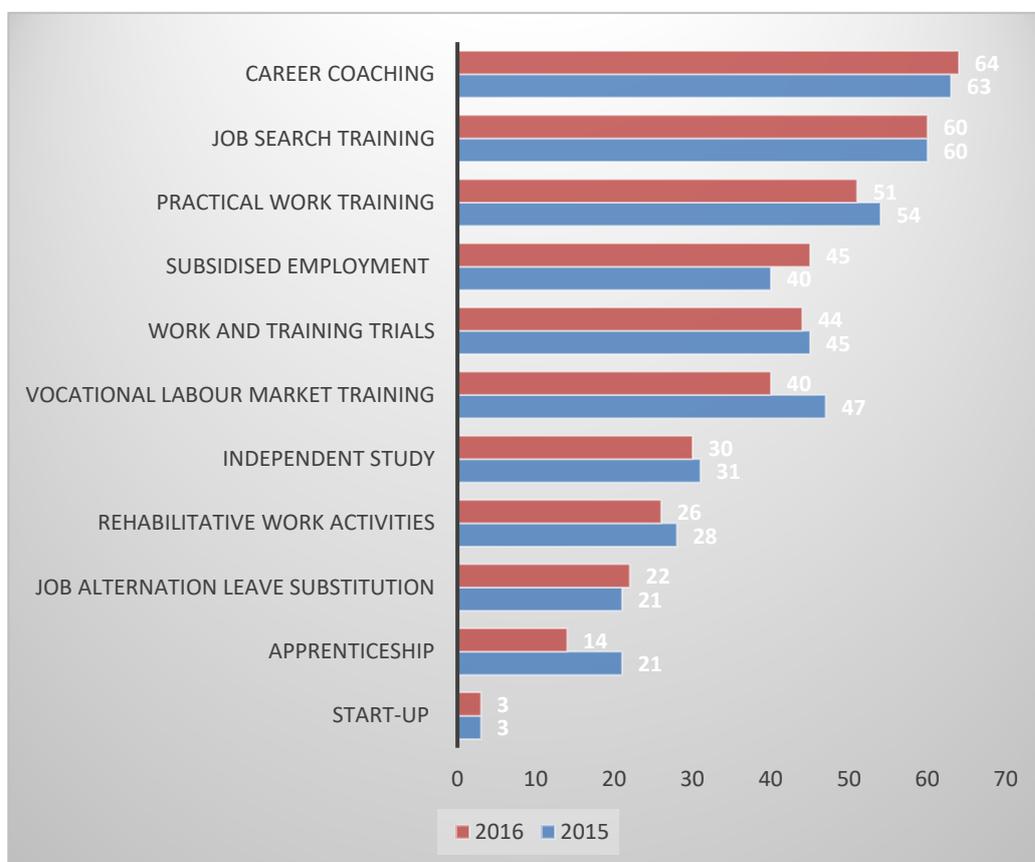


**Figure 56.** The rate of employment 3 months after ending an employment service for 2016 and 2017. (Statistics Finland / Employment statistics)

## 2. The rate of unemployment three months after ending an employment service spell

Sundvall (2017) examined the effectiveness of labor market policy services by following up the unemployment rate of its participants after 3 months after the end of service participation during 2015–2016. Start-ups, apprenticeship, and job alternation schemes are the most effective services. Correspondingly, career

coaching, job-search training, and practical work training are the least effective service (see Figure 57).



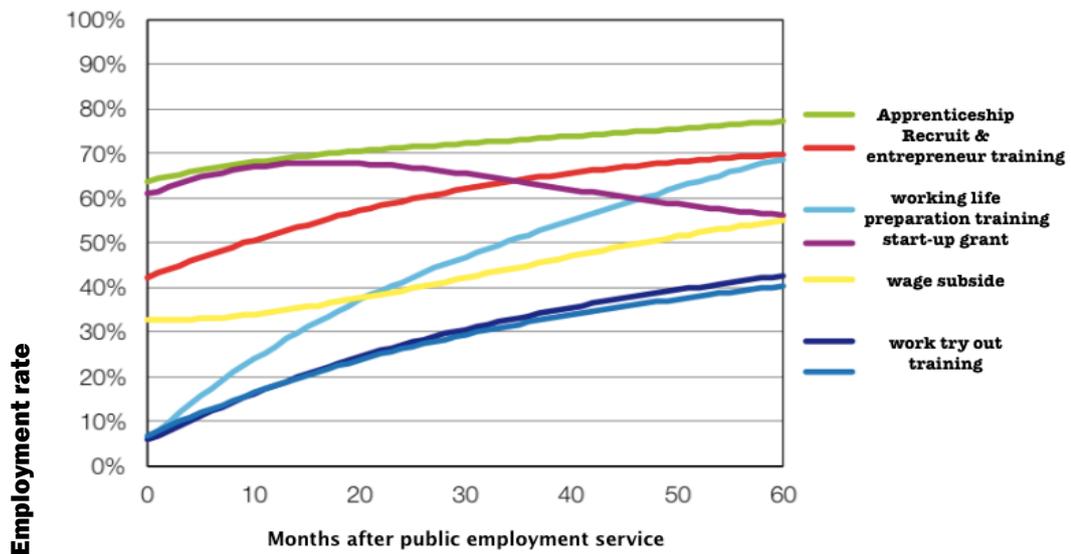
**Figure 57.** The rate of unemployment 3 months after ending an employment service. (Statistics Finland/Employment statistics)

### 3. The employment trends after ending an employment service spell for 5 years:

Eronen et al. (2014): Figure 58 shows the employment trends after ending an employment service spell for 5 years. The development and employment of work trials and training, which is not very similar to recruitment training or start-up. After 5 years, the employment rate of those who participated will be around 40%. The employment rate of those who participated in work-related coaching starts was at the same level as those who participated in work trials and training but increased significantly faster, reaching around 70% in 5 years.

After recruitment training and apprenticeship, employment will increase at about the same rate as work trials and other training, but the entry level will be significantly higher than for the latter measures. After the actual employment measures (wage subsidy, and others), employment will grow slightly faster than, for example, after a work trail, but the growth would appear to continue only for

about 3.5 years. An exception measure is start-ups because that employment rate will only grow for a couple of years and then start to decline. However, the development is quite natural because entrepreneurship always carries the risk of ending the business. Generally, start-up companies have been found to experience a sharp decline after the 4th year of operation (Stenholm and Aaltonen 2012).

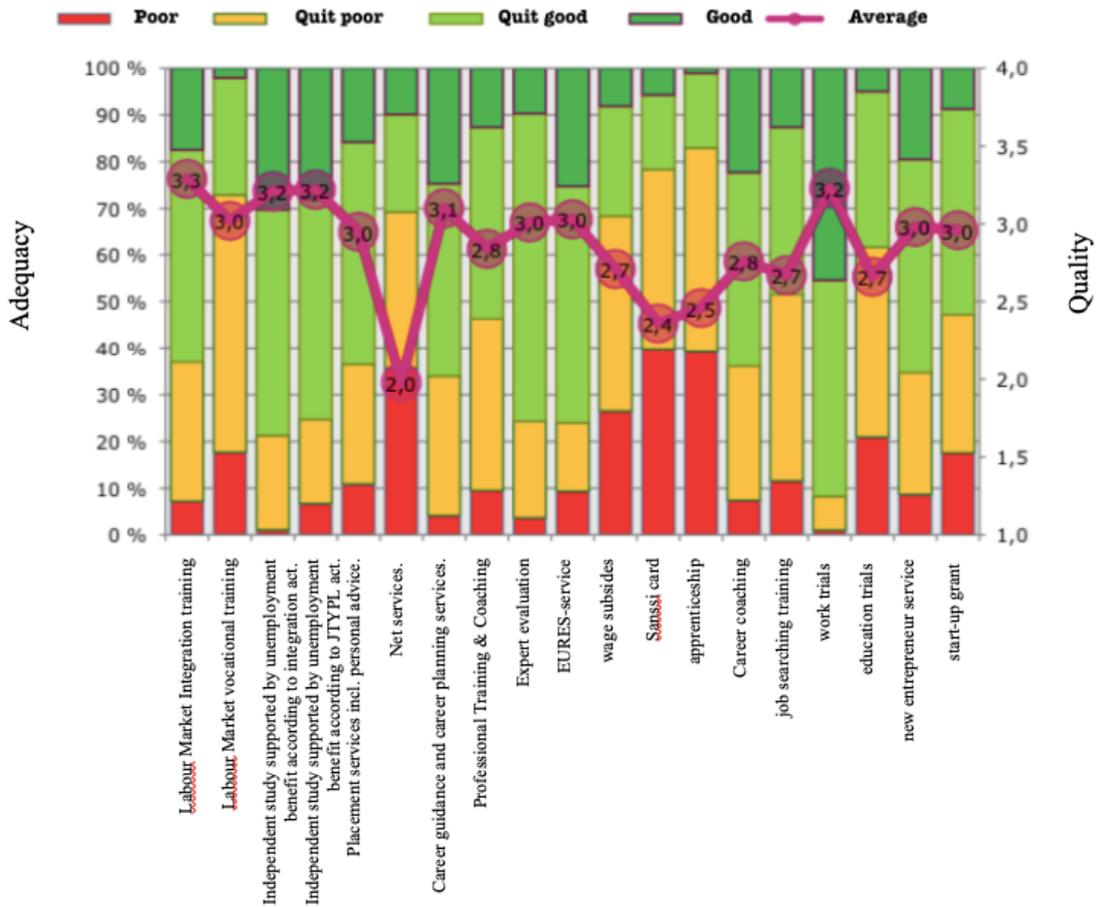


**Figure 58.** The employment trends after ending an employment service spell for 5 years (Eronen et al. 2014)

#### 4. Quality and adequacy of public employment services:

In 2016, the Ministry of Employment and the Economics published a report that presents the results of a service survey conducted in the fall of 2015 for the PES Office.

Figure 59 illustrates PES officers' rating of the labor market services provided to beneficiaries of integration services. The lowest scores were for online services, wage subsidies service, the Sanssi card (one of the tools used to facilitate the employment of the youth, which PES offered to young job seekers as a proof of the possibility of wage subsidy which can be shown when they apply for open vacancies and help them to get a job), and apprenticeship. The highest scores were for work trials followed by an independent study on unemployment benefits under either the Integration Act or the Public Employment Service and Business Services Act (JTYPL). This clearly reflected foreign participation in employment service. Depending on the figure, it rarely steered foreigners into employment services with high employment outcomes such as wage subsidy or apprenticeships.



**Figure 59.** Quality and adequacy of personal customer services from the perspective of the PES integration section counselors. (FMEE 2016b)

Now, in this section, we introduce recent studies about labor market measures provided by PES:

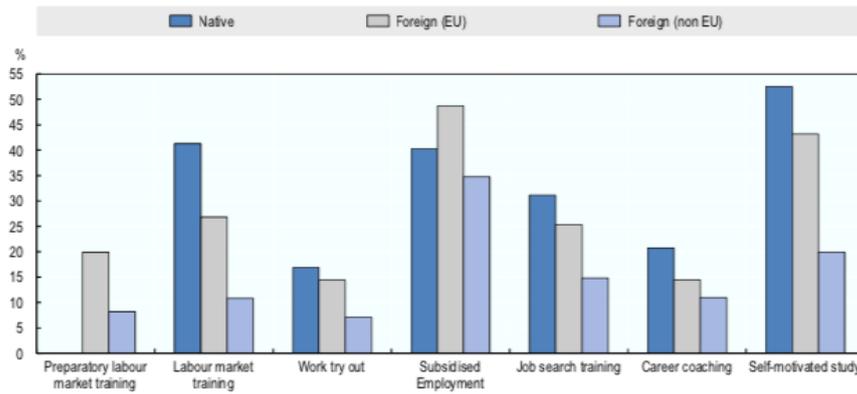
**Work trial:** In a recent study conducted by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment (2019), work trials were examined from the perspectives of clients of PES Offices, participants, and specialists. Work trials improved the participants’ situation both in terms of employment and educational opportunities. However, work trials did not improve the situation of those belonging to disadvantaged groups. But steps should be taken to continue and develop work trials. They should be linked more closely with other services, studies, and language skills development. Clearer instructions and systematic control are required to prevent any misuse related to work trials. PES Offices should appoint persons responsible

for work trials. Also, training and harmonization of practices is required (Mayer et al. 2019).

**Wage-subsided and entrepreneurial support:** The Parliamentary Audit Committee mentions in its report that the likelihood of employment also varied depending on the measures assigned. Post-measure employment was largely dependent on the nature of services. Taking into account all the underlying factors, those most likely to find employment were immigrants who had participated in wage-subsided work and, in the case of men, those who had received entrepreneurial support (NAOF 2018). Integration services close to the labor market facilitate labor market integration best such as vocational training provided as an active labor market policy and wage subsidies (FMI 2015; Aho and Mäkiahö 2017).

**Independent study and vocational labor market training:** Figure 60 illustrates that, native-born Finn participants had better outcomes than foreign-born participants after all forms of labor market service; the significant difference was shown after independent study. Only 23.1 percent of immigrant participants and only 20% of non-EU nationalities found jobs three months after finishing independent study, whilst 52% of natives found employment (OECD 2018).

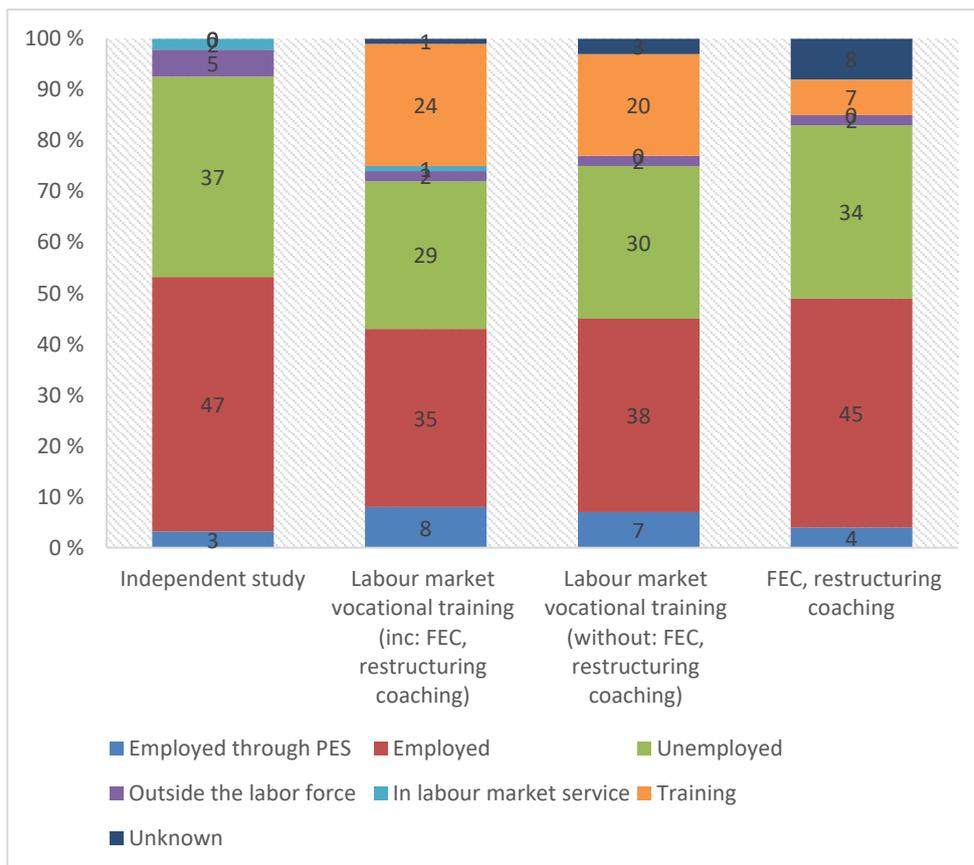
The employment rate was lower than average for both men and women among those who participated in integration training and independent training (NAOF 2018). Also, the ELY report mentioned that independent study, vocational labor market training, FEC (Further Educated with Companies), and restructuring coaching are clearly effective services (see Figure 61), but analysis found that the Finnish-Swedish-speaking population had a 1.78 times higher employment probability than the foreign-language population after taking into account clients' mother language (Sundvall 2017)



Notes: Figures capturing those entering employment may also capture those are no longer searching for employment but left the labour force.

Source: Employment Service Statistics, Ministry of Employment and the Economy.

**Figure 60.** The percentage of former participants entering employment 3 months after ending an employment service spell by nationality 2017



**Figure 61.** Employment status of clients who completed their independent studies or vocational training in November-December 2016 6 months after graduation (Sundvall 2017)

In conclusion, wage subsidy or apprenticeship are the best PES measures for migrants.

Review PES role in integration service:

The PES Office plays an important role in the integration of migrants into the labor market. However, the PES Office has been criticized in previous research. Some migrants claim that TE offices are uninterested in them or their abilities. Migrants have discovered that the TE-office is of little help to them, and it is unable to provide individualized assistance to customers, at least for immigrant women (Steel and Jyrkinen 2017).

According to a recent survey conducted by (The Developing Guidance for Refugees Project), there is a shared notion between PES officers that client conditions are becoming increasingly complicated and that more skills and training are needed when working with immigrants. PES officers face challenges to recognize and evaluate the skills of refugee clients. PES officers feel largely that there is insufficient information to assess the whole clients' situation. Also, it is worth noting a shared feeling among them that meeting with an immigrant or refugee takes longer, and sometimes they communicate with their clients over the phone rather than in a face-to-face meeting (Hagman, Laitinen-Saunio and Asikainen 2020). Surprisingly, only 11% of PES counselors who participated in The Developing Guidance for Refugees Project's survey fully agreed that they had enough information to work with migrants; 46% of PES counselors feel that they did not have enough information about the service system of Finnish society in the context of immigrants; and 40% of PES counselors felt they did not have enough skills to work with migrants (Hagman et al. 2020).

Furthermore, according to a recent government report PES counselors believe that subsidized employment is ineffective service for enhancing migrants' employment, and migrants should be steered to work tryouts or independent study instead (OECD 2018; FMEE 2016).

It was rare to steer foreigners into employment services with high employment outcomes like wage subsidized or apprenticeship. Just 4.9% of PES customers from migrants from outside EU participated in subsidized employment compared to 24.1% of native-born PES customers (OECD 2018).

Finland is not alone in this problem. The EU's synthesis report (ICF 2018) also mentions investment needed in upscaling the PES services for refugees in the EU countries. It is important that it be tailored to the refugees' specific circumstances. PES faces a twofold challenge in adapting to refugees' needs. The first part, there

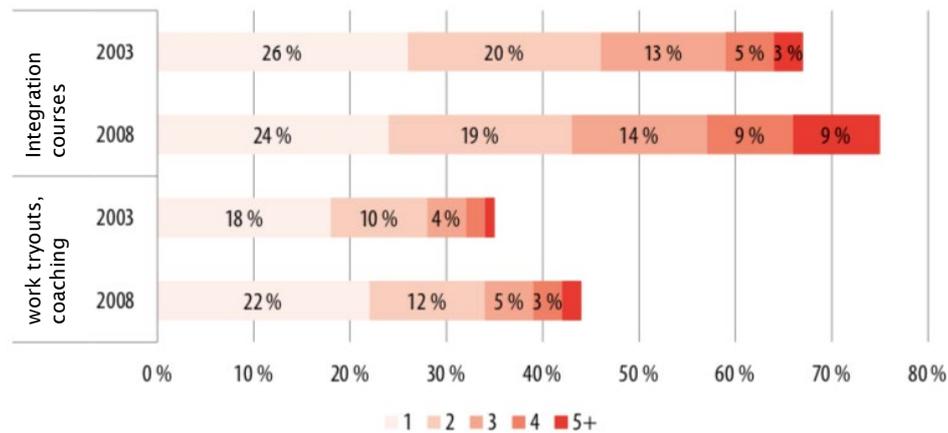
is a dearth of understanding about the legal situation and career options for refugees, and second, there is a shortage of employees with a knowledge of the hurdles that refugees may face (cultural and language barriers, prejudice, and impediments to accessing rights and services) as well as the required skills and tools to communicate with them (i.e., cultural awareness, mediation, managing diversity abilities (EU 2018).

The image of an immigrant student in Kurki's research (2018) comes to mind along with why this image was created

*a common description of immigrant students was manifested as someone who is at risk of exclusion, passive and different, has problems in studies and in life control skills, lacks basic knowledge, cannot choose suitable education, cannot set realistic goals, cannot be responsible, does not have clear vision of life and future, does not have skills to study in VET, does not want to develop, does not know their rights and responsibilities, and does not have control of their behaviour, dressing up, or personal hygiene.*

This situation could explain why long-time PES migrants participate in PES measures more often than those Finnish native unemployed (Aho and Mäkiahö 2017) and why "yoyo transitions" (Lundahl and Olofsson 2014) between different integration and PES measures like integration courses, work try-outs, and labor market training are the rule rather than the exception among many immigrants with frequent round-trips between different PES services (Kurki 2018).

Figure 62 shows how many integration service customers participated in different types of measures. Three out of four have attended integration training at least once and about half at least twice and about 1 in 10 at least 5 times. Traineeships or coaching are also frequent with 44% having participated at least once and half at least twice. Thus, these common measures are typically offered to integration service customer in several or more successive sections (Aho and Mäkiahö 2017).



**Figure 62.** Those who made their first integration plan in 2003 or 2008: number of integration training (guidance training) and work tryouts/coaching courses started during the three-year integration period (Aho and Makiaho 2017)

As the last point in this section, we might agree with NAOF's conclusion that the larger number of measures, the lower rate of employment. A large number of measures indicates a greater need for support for employment (NAOF 2018).

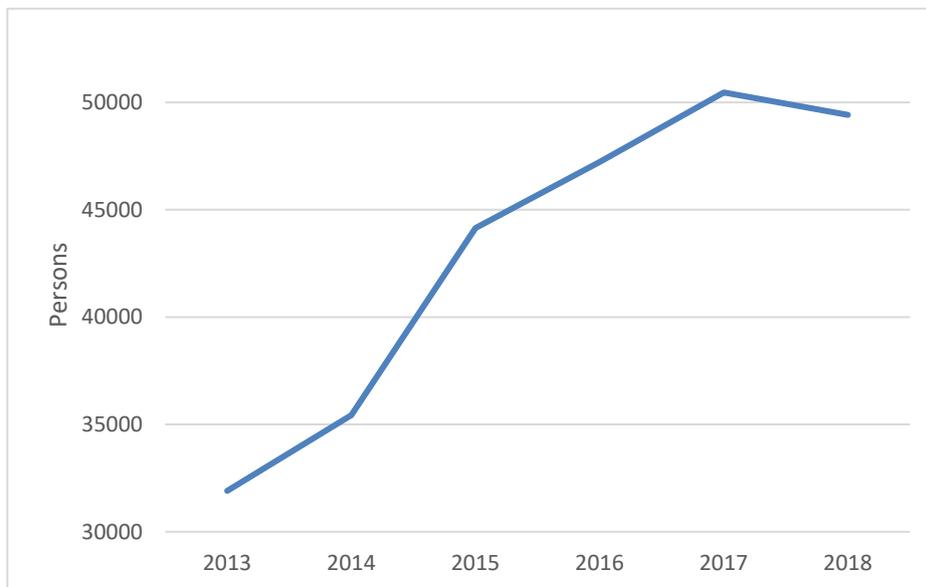
In this section, we connect the points to define the problem.

First problem: Misused carrot-and-stick policy

At the same time, the language proficiency requirements for vocational education and training were relaxed and more education targeted at immigrants aiming for obtaining a qualification, changes in expense allowance payment happened starting from January 1, 2017. An expense allowance no longer paid for independent study referred to in the Act on Public Employment and Business Service, but it still paid for independent studies referred to in the Act on the Promotion of Integration of Immigrants.

The effect of this expense allowance payment change was discussed in Toimi's project (basic social security and activity project for support political actors and pre-election parties in developing views on social security reform) on solutions on January 23, 2019. Deterioration of the incentive to independent study in relation to other public employment services problems has been noticed as January 1, 2017, when the expense allowances for independent study supported by an unemployment benefit was removed from job seekers who will start study supported by unemployment benefit while the expense allowances of other public employment services was retained, which reduces the relative attractiveness of

independent study. The significance of the expense allowance in the livelihood of a low-income jobseeker may be such that it directs their behavior in an inappropriate way (e.g., a person benefiting from the acquisition of the skills contained in a degree or part-qualification would prefer to apply for a 6-month work trial for example in a small organization where such knowledge cannot be obtained; FPMO 2019). Figure 63 shows how the trend of using this service started to decline in 2017.



**Figure 63.** Participant numbers of independent study 2013–2018 (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, Employment Service Statistics)

It is important to mention here that Nieminen (2019) recognized in FMEE's regional economic prospects in the Autumn 2019 report that there is a worrying situation in the Uusimaa region, increasing the number of unemployed job seekers without a profession. At the end of July 2019, there were more than 17,000 unemployed people or people whose profession is unknown. The number has increased by more than 15% year-on-year. Rising unemployment often indicates a general deterioration in the economic situation. So, we argue, there may seem also to be a connection between increasing unemployed people without profession and the new legalization.

Relating to new regulations, according to the Uusimaa PES statement provided to the parliamentary audit committee on September 26, 2018, some of the PES counselors believe that many of its foreign customers during integration time may not even think of applying for a job at a time when they are receiving an expense allowance in addition to the unemployment benefit. Also, some of PES counselors believe that a lot of incorrect information has spread among immigrants. For

example, the rumor of 3 years of integration seems to have spread widely (FP 2018).

Depending on this kind of belief or intuition, some PES counselors used this change as a stick with integration service beneficiaries by ceasing integration rights and dealing with them according to the Act on Public Employment and Business Service instead of the Act on the Promotion of Integration of Immigrants.

Results of ceasing integration rights:

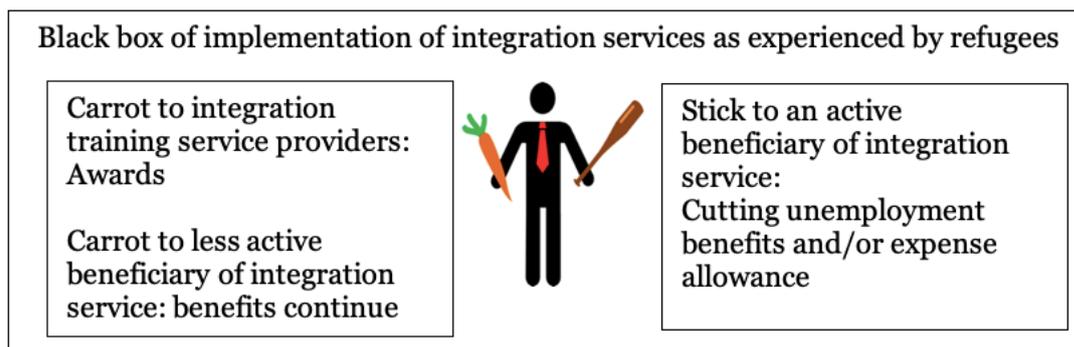
1. Client under 25 years of age will no more get unemployment benefits for studying vocational education.
2. Client over 25 years of age could still study with unemployment benefits but without an expense allowance in the vocational school.

So, here the effect of this problem on integration service beneficiaries is worse than on Finnish people or on other groups because it could remove all unemployment benefits. As a result, a decision of any PES counselor to stop the integration plan or cease integration rights, in one way or another, is translated by migrants as a stick.

The reaction of a refugee who is an integration service beneficiary was different from the Finnish one

The majority of refugees felt that a refugee who is hardly actively studying the Finnish language to reach at A2.2-B1.1 level for entering vocational school as soon as possible will be punished for their activity by losing unemployment benefits totally if they are under 25 years and partly if they are 25 years or over. Unfortunately, the refugee could understand that this procedure is to encourage them to laziness rather than activeness.

Interestingly, this punishment opposes attempts by the Finnish Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment (FMEE) and ELY-Center to improve the performance and quality of integration training by rewarding integration training service providers with two kinds of rewards, an effectiveness award and an employment award, as new competitive conditions for new integration training appear. Depending on the new rules: the Finnish government will pay an integration training provider 5000 € if the effectiveness level is good (over 73%), or 7000€ if the effectiveness level is excellent (over 77%). Also, the Finnish government will pay an employment award of 2.000€ per employed student if 1-3 student employed for at least 6 months or 2500€ per employed student if at least four students are employed for at least 6 months (ELY-Center for Uusimaa 2019).



**Figure 64.** Stick and Carrot policy/Black box of implementation of Finnish integration services as experienced by refugees after 2017.

In contrast to this carrot-and-stick policy implemented by some of Finnish PES counselors as illustrated in Figure 64, in Sweden, aiming to learn Swedish more quickly, a refugee, a person in need of protection or a person who has received their residence permit and depends on their family ties, could get the SFI Bonus for completing some of the Swedish language courses. The SFI Bonus would get paid if a person completed the course within 12 months of starting it and gained at least a passing grade on the course 1B, 2C, or 3D. For course 1B, they may be paid SEK 6 000, for course 2C they may be paid SEK 8 000, and for course 3D they may be paid SEK 12 000. A person does not need to pay tax on their bonus payment and will still receive the same allowances or special benefits for refugees and newcomers (Swedish Government 2010) see Table 16.

**Table 16.** Comparison table between Swedish carrot & Finnish stick policy

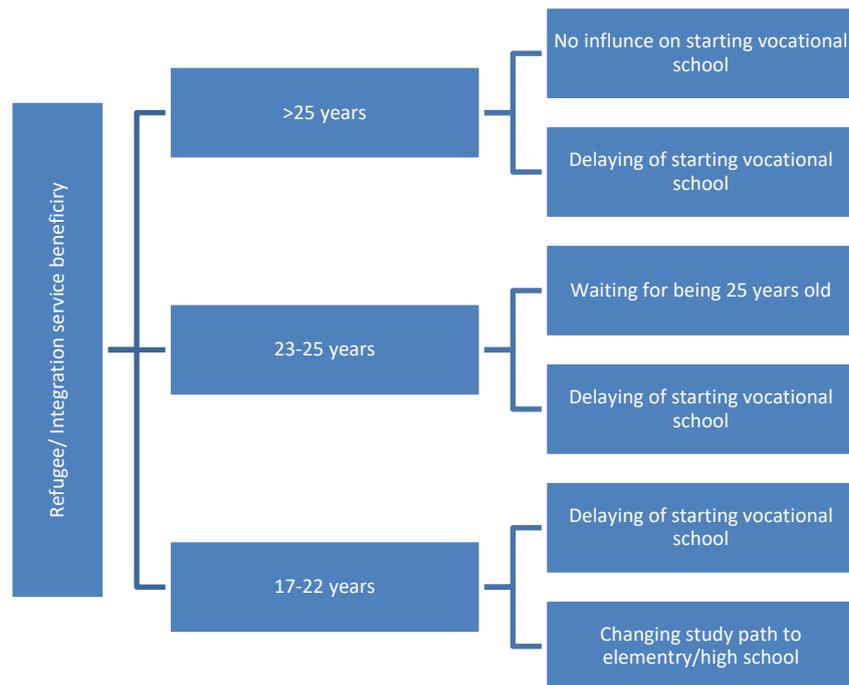
Finland	< 25 years old	Cutting unemployment benefits and expense allowance around 900 €/month before tax
	=25 or >25 years old	Cutting expense allowance around 198 € Free tax / month
Sweden	18-64 years old, Pass grade 1B course	Bonus 6000 SEK, around 600 € Free tax
	18-64 years old, Pass grade 2C course	Bonus 8000 SEK, around 800 € Free tax
	18-64 years old, Pass grade 3D course	Bonus 12000 SEK, around 1200 € Free tax

Designed by researcher depending on this research and the Swedish Government (2010)

As a result (see Figure 65), some of immigrants slow down their move from integration courses to vocational education as long as possible or try to find other paths to help them to continue this benefit by studying something else. Khalid (interviewee) said, “It’s not my responsibility. I am forced by the system. This is the system’s mistake.”

Depending on participants’ opinions with closer inspection revealed that the effects of this change could be divided into three groups (17–22, 23–25, and > 25):

- ❖ 17–22 years old: Some expressed their desire to delay their transition to vocational studies as long as possible aiming to benefit from their integration plan as much as possible and for their economic inability to bear the abolition of unemployment support.
- ❖ 23–25 years old: Some expressed, as did the 17–22 years group, their desire to delay their transition to vocational studies as long as possible aiming to benefit from their integration plan as much as possible and for their economic inability to bear the abolition of unemployment benefits. Also, some of this group would like to wait until being 25 years old for starting vocational education to minimizing losses from unemployment benefits and expense allowances to just expense allowances.
- ❖ Over 25 years old: Some of this group expressed their desire to delay their transition to vocational studies as long as possible aiming to benefit from the integration plan as much as possible and for their economic inability to bear the abolition of unemployment support. Many expressed that removing expense allowances will not influence their decision about starting vocational education.



**Figure 65.** Reaction of participants to Finnish PES officer's stick policy 2017–2019.

Previous results could explain why the time used by immigrants for training has simultaneously increased even though training courses have become shorter, according to information from Education Portal Database as reported by the National Audit Office on Integration Training Performance Review Report 2018 mentioned above.

Second problem discovered is the meaning of an integrated person is still mysterious relating to refugees' experiences

Many refugees said, "Our experiences were disappointing; how is it possible we are integrated and unintegrated at the same time according to different Finnish organizations?"

In some cases, a municipality may stop integration services for a refugee who's still a fellow in an integration plan in the PES Office. From the other side, in some cases, the PES Office may finish the integration plan, stop integration rights, and draw an employment plan for a refugee yet integration services continue to be provided for them by the municipality. As a result, a distorted and obscured image has been formed about the Finnish system. Some refugees think a real reason for this is the temperament of Finnish employees or their failure to assess. Others attribute the reason to racism of employers even if that is not the real reason on the ground. These results thus need to be treated with attention. This mysterious picture might

affect a refugee's decision and the steps taken in their daily life toward resettlement.

Third problem: related to refugees' understanding about integration, employment paths, and unemployment's reasons

A special part of the survey was focused on understanding the meaning of integration according to refugees. We found that 70% of those surveyed believed that integration means knowledge of the Finnish language, employment, graduation from Finnish education institutes, a sense of belonging, and respect of Finnish law (see Figure 66). This understanding harmonizes with VALKO II goals, especially when talking about employment as a way of integration.

Refugees consider the integration course participation as important and necessary for being a member of Finnish society or for integrating inside and consider it as the main key for employment. Acquiring a Finnish education certificate is the second most important factor for enhancing integration, improving employment opportunities, and erasing unemployment reasons (see Figure 67).

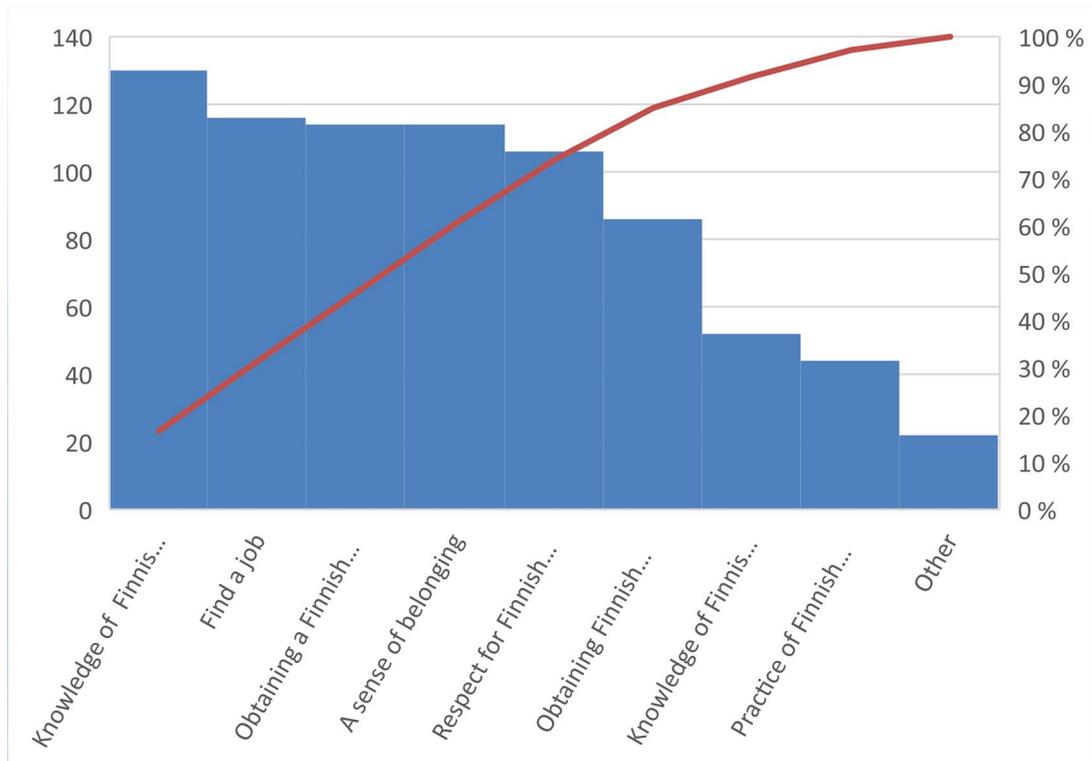
Figure 68 illustrates that social networking is highlighted as an important factor for getting a job. This is in line with previous studies, as mentioned in Nordregio's Working Paper (2017); in the Nordic countries, social networks are essential to accessing the labor market both for migrants and in general. There is evidence that immigrants with native-born friends and those who participated in volunteer organizations have higher employment rates (Karlsdóttir et al. 2017). Networks are important in the early stages of integration. It can help people in need to connect with the right people and their peers and share knowledge. This building of relationships with people is a good thing as they help the community's well-being (Maoi and Ghaffar 2014). Ensuring a bidirectional integration, that is, helping Finnish society adapt to being a diverse society also promotes the employment of immigrants (NAOF 2018).

Work-trial is also mentioned as an important tool for finding a job, but previous studies confirmed that work-trial has little outcome on employment. In general, 15% is the employment rate 3 months after ending a work try-out and is less than 10% for foreign-born clients (see figure 60).

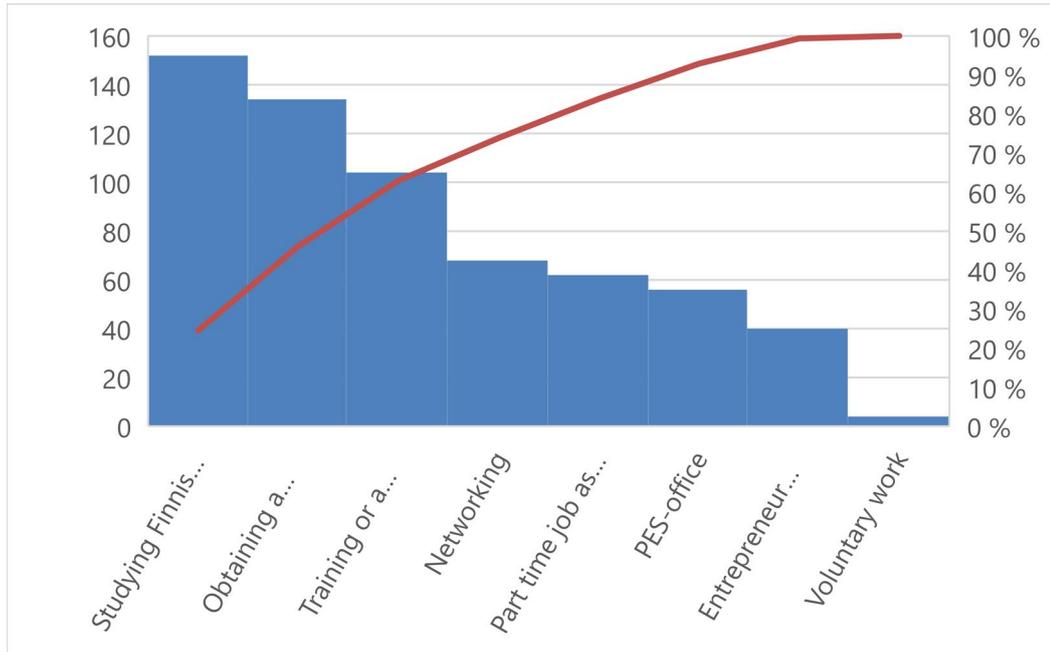
More than 50% of those surveyed believed that racism is an important reason for not being hired. Earlier studies show a high percentage of Finns are still distrustful if not outright hostile to "non-White-Finns." For years, attitudes against Russians and Somalis have been largely negative. Thus, racism, discrimination, unfavorable views, labor market non-transparency, and institutional impediments such as

legislative limitations for migrants are the underlying reasons behind the inability of migrants to integrate into the labor market (Kurki 2018; Könönen 2011; Vuori 2012).

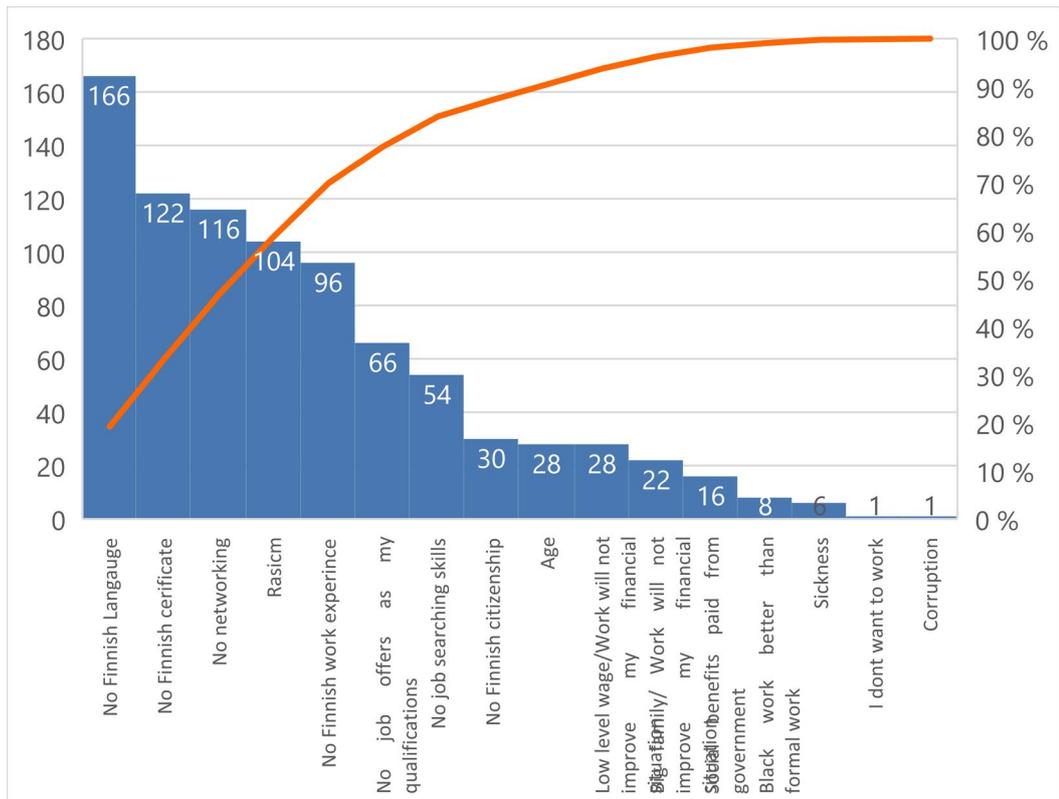
This problem was reported in the Government Report on the Implementation of the Integration Act (2002). Racism and discrimination strongly influence the integration of immigrants. A hostile environment slows down integration. Equal and non-discriminatory treatment and effective action against discrimination, on the other hand, increase immigrants' confidence in the main population and the authorities and promote integration. Also, we should mention here that the Finnish Government Integration Program 2016–2019 has set the goal of fostering positive attitudes, non-discrimination and managing diversity in cooperation with labor market organizations. Also, one of the aims of the national working life plan, Working Life 2020, is to enhance trust, mutual appreciation, openness, and reciprocity in Finnish workplaces (FMI 2018).



**Figure 66.** Meaning of Integration according to participants.



**Figure 67.** Best ways for enhancing employment opportunities according to this study participants.



**Figure 68.** Most important reasons for being unemployed according to this study participants.

### 3.4.6 The third step is developing solutions

In this section, we develop solutions depending on customers' points of view on taking into account the objectives of the Finnish government and companies needs consistent with recommendations from previous research.

Recommendations from previous studies:

**1-Invest in future citizens:** The migrant of today is a future citizen, so any payment paid to him is an investment. As Og Mandino said, "Always do your best. What you plant, you will harvest later." So, considerable attention must be paid when implementing the government integration program to avoid and reduce problems among refugees as much as possible such as underemployment, a high over-qualification rate, labor market exclusion, long-term unemployment, involuntary inactivity, poverty and relative child poverty, low PISA rate, high NEET rate, housing overcrowded and substandard, perceived discrimination, and an absence of a sense of belonging.

Kurki (2018) concluded that "Finnish society is, however, thought of as a superior benefactor to whom immigrants remain in a debt of gratitude." Even though integration is costly, especially in the early stages of arrival, politicians assure the majority population that increasing tax revenues, a younger demographic structure, increasing consumer demand, and the diversification of working life and society that encourages innovation and widens the market, are all used to offset the expenses (Kurki 2018). According to the Institute for Employment Research and the German Institute for Economic Research, every Euro invested on integration measures will result in a threefold reduction in cumulative fiscal expenses in the long run (Duso et al. 2017).

**2-Learn from neighbors' experiences:** Finland may draw on the expertise of its neighbors who have long been involved in this sector to develop innovative integration methods such as the SFI bonus and high work subsidies presentation from Sweden and a model of language requirements for applying for citizenship from the Netherlands.

**3-No time to lose, take advantage of the golden hour:** As OECD (2018) has highlighted, that for a long time, the necessity of early integration has been confirmed in the literature, highlighting the need for newcomers to avoid extended periods of unemployment following their arrival (OECD 2006; OECD/European Union 2016). According to recent study, the first 2 to 3 years following arriving have a disproportionately beneficial influence on the likelihood of employment; after this period, the probability declines by 23% (Hangartner 2016) as a result,

the inaction cost during the “integration window or golden hour” is relatively too large (OECD 2018).

#### 3.4.7 Fourth Step Delivering Solutions: Three-dimension solutions of Finnish government, companies, and customers:

First Ax: Finnish government goals-orientation:

The Finnish government aims to increase the immigrants’ employment rate, as the employment rate of the foreign-born population was 10% lower than the locally born population in 2018 because Finland has a labor shortage in some areas, and population aging will exacerbate this situation in the future (FMI 2019).

Second Ax: Company orientation:

Companies need both high-qualified employees and manual labor forces. The majority of a first residence permit for an employed person concerned manual labor (53% of applicants). Sectors for which such residence permits are issued include agriculture, catering, construction, cleaning, and transport (EMN 2018). The carrot strategy should be taken by the government to encourage companies to give migrants already in Finland a chance to demonstrate their skills (e.g., wage-supported labor forces, bonuses like tax exemptions or funds).

Third Ax: Customer (Refugee) orientation:

Refugees are different, and their needs are different. We should consider their different needs for services before developing solutions. Aiming at this goal, we divided customers into six groups.

**Group 1: Ready to work:** Some refugees who speak English with suitable qualifications and work experience are ready to enter the Finnish labor market immediately.

**Group 2: Qualification recognition seekers:** This is a group of refugees who have qualifications with/without work experience. They would like to find work corresponding to their qualifications or still need to have their foreign degree recognized to enter the Finnish labor market.

**Group 3: Young people need to be invested in:** Some refugees under 30 years with/without elementary/secondary education or work experiences need to invest in an education in Finland (in higher or secondary vocational education /elementary education). This will significantly enhance their long-term prospects

in the Finnish labor market. It is important that these groups receive appropriate guidance in choosing education and during their studies. Naturally, it must be taken into account to continue to improve their level of the Finnish language so that it does not become an obstacle to their education.

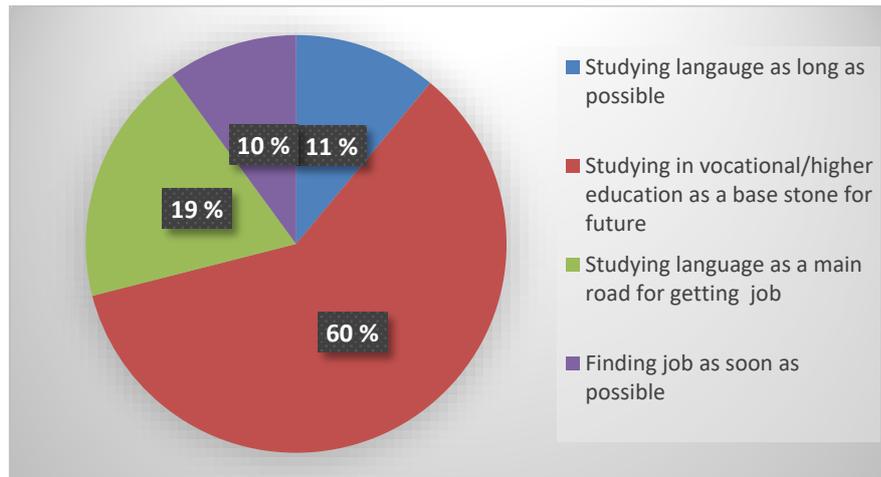
**Group 4: No more study benches (apprenticeship path):** For some refugees over 30 years with an elementary or secondary education or work experiences, sitting on study benches is not the best option. An investment in an apprenticeship study path would significantly enhance their long-term prospects in the Finnish labor market.

**Group 5: “Don’t give up” group:** Some refugees whose work matching is not an option right now and who are at an even more disadvantage in the labor market for many reasons like having socio-psychological problems, and they are labor market activation needers (we suggest creating new type of employment plan (activation plan within integration)).

**Group 6: Employment support needers:** Some refugees have the skills and experience to be employed in the Finnish labor market. They must get information on the labor market in their chosen field as well as information on ways and channels of applying for work or starting a business. If required, an opportunity must be provided to participate in a competency and skills survey, to gain the necessary certifications for work, and to start the process of recognition of a foreign degree.

In this current research:

**Customers’ needs:** All customers would like to benefit from the integration plan/period as much as possible. We found 60% of refugees would like to benefit from an integration period in study, reasoning to improve their skills and opportunities and to skip from the low wage job trap. About 19% of refugees would like to work after learning the Finnish language very well as a compulsory way to integrate into Finland and find work. Nearly 11% of refugees would like to study the Finnish language as long as possible for many reasons such as the difficulties of the Finnish language, inability to pick up language, health reasons, or age factors. Another 10% of refugees would like to enter work life in Finland as soon as possible (see Figure 69).



**Figure 69.** Desires and aspirations of refugees from the integration period.

Our strategy for developing solutions is improving existing services and creating new ones:

Facilitating the day-one strategy to integrate migrant by easing language skills barriers at the entry point into the labor market while implementing long-term language acquisition procedures.

Integration training:

-A refugee as a customer of integration training should get sufficient motivation to study language without any fear of someone cutting his benefits. That's why careful attention must be paid when using the carrot-and-stick policy by PES counsellors. The integration plan should be used as a tool for promoting integration, not for delaying it.

-Enhancing integration independent training performance by using other PES services because earlier research (NAOF 2018) discovered that, the language skill of people who participated in PES integration courses was slightly better than people who participated in integration independent training.

-Finland should develop a language bonus by adopting the Sweden model (SFI bonus) for maximizing refugees' efforts in learning the language.

**Work tryouts:** Work tryouts could be used for acquiring work experience.

Acquired work experience in Finland is important for further employment (Kostiainen and Laakso 2014). The aim of PES office facilitated work tryouts is to support jobseekers with choosing a career path and expediting re-entering the labor market. However, that's its meaning, the PES Office cannot support work

tryouts to be used to accumulate language skills and work experience; as a result, there is a need for a new service form that would allow this to be (Eronen et al. 2014). On the job language learning is quite effective (OECD/UNHCR 2016).

As researchers have highlighted, steps should be taken to continue and develop work tryouts. It should be linked more closely with other services, studies, and language skills development. Work tryouts improved the participants' situation both in terms of employment and educational opportunities especially for young people (Mayer et al. 2019).

#### Work subsidies:

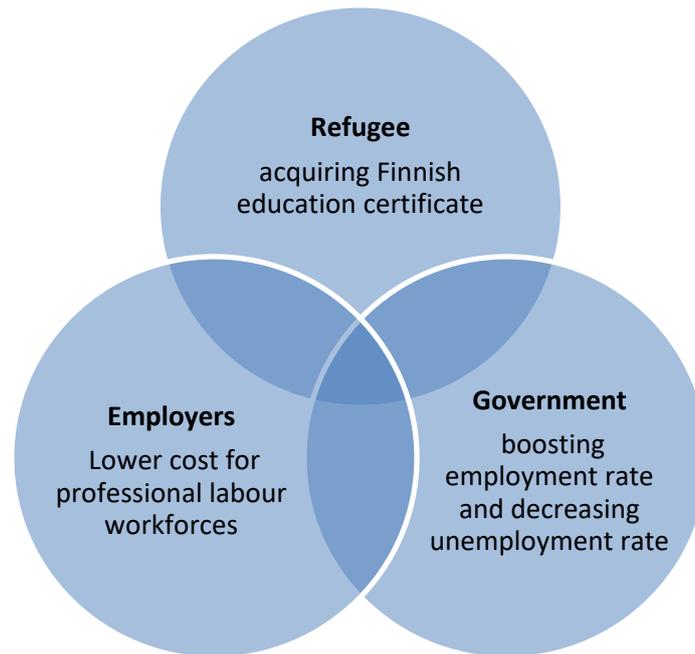
The integration-promoting services provided by the PES Office cater to immigrants who are setting off on their employment path and who need support and a variety of services to help them gain a foothold in the job market. However, the measures included in the integration plan may not be adequate on their own. Employment must also be supported by services close to the open job market such as wage-subsidized work (FPAC 2018).

- The extent and duration of work subsidies depends on the length of unemployment but participation time in integration training is not counting as unemployment time. This restriction renders the majority of newcomers (who have undertaken integration training) ineligible to larger work subsidies although they desperately need it to improve their employability (OECD 2018).

- Unemployment benefits can be used to fund work subsidies (Finnish Government 2018).

- New support services for employers to hire immigrants: companies must be assisted in employing migrants as part of the labor market integration (Bontenbal et al. 2019) Also, according to Ala-Kauhaluoma et al. (2018), there is a need for new services to be developed in order for companies to recruit more migrants. Such services might include providing various advantages and remuneration to companies for recruiting migrants.

Design integration policies that take time into account throughout migrants' lifetimes. The investigation revealed the best employment outcomes of PES measures are apprenticeship, wage subsidy, entrepreneur training, and start-up grants. But apprenticeship would be the best measure because it fulfills the goal of refugees (acquiring Finnish education certificate), employers (professional labor workforces with wage subsidies), and government goals (boosting the employment rate and decreasing the unemployment rate) see Figure 70.



**Figure 70.** Apprenticeship is a suggested solution to satisfy and fulfill all parties.

#### **Entrepreneurship:**

- As mentioned by an OECD report (2018), entrepreneurship is a path into the labor market and may be the only alternative to informal labor that can be supported by authorities. The case studies (for example, Gothenburg, Rome) show that migrants may be actively self-employed in many countries. In Sweden, for example, the percentage of Swedish men entrepreneur is 4.8%, but it jumps to 7.7% of Iranian-born men entrepreneurs and 11.4% of Syrian-born men entrepreneur. Entrepreneurship is increasingly viewed as a viable employment option, according to an earlier study (Froy and Pyne 2011), this is particularly true for young migrants and may contribute to local economic growth.

-Unemployment benefits can be used to fund start-up grants (Finnish Government 2018).

- Unemployed persons may pursue business activities for 4 months without losing their unemployment benefit (Finnish Government 2018).

Integration golden hour strategy:

An integration service beneficiary could study in independent training and receive unemployment benefits. Training must be at least 20 hours/week and not required to be classroom-based learning. It also could be personalized learning/internet-

based learning or mixed. Even the labor market integration training in Helsinki Metropolitan area is not more than 5-6 hours/day. This half-day study could give one a chance to exercise other PES services like work tryouts, wage subsidies, or even other training such as an entrepreneurship course.

Right now, the PES Office uses sequential services, which means it doesn't provide more than one service at a time for a customer. For example, a customer can't study in integration training and get other services like a work trial at the same time. Giving an opportunity for participating in different types of services parallel to each other could be an advantage for active people to choose the best or most effective way for maximizing their chances of employment. It could be better for a migrant to study the Finnish language in the morning and to do work, language training, or a work trial in the evening, or vice versa. In this way, a migrant could start contact with Finnish society, explore Finnish work life, and build their own network in the early stages of their life in Finland. This change would solve the problem of lowering language skills for independent integration training participants that was mentioned in the NAOF study (2018), and advance people who participated in independent integration training to achieve a higher Finnish language skill level because most of the independent integration training in the Helsinki metropolitan area doesn't include language training as labor market integration training, which usually is done during a work placement where practical language skills are developed.

**Self-supported path:** This path could be designed for supporting the part-time working newly arrived refugees on building their integration path by themselves without fearing losing any kind of benefits and designing their integration plan depending on their working-time. Now, they receive an unemployment benefit request to be ready for a full-time job and to join the PES services like integration training. Because of this, during integration time, a customer can't continue with their part-time job when they get integration training or can't quit training to start a part-time job because they will lose their unemployment benefits.

On this path, a customer is responsible for arranging integration/vocational training or other PES measures like an entrepreneurship course, a wage subsidy, or work tryout (if there's any possibility for getting a full-time job from another company or for getting a job corresponding to his qualifications) in parallel to their job.

This path could provide tax relief to a customer for covering:

- The cost of Finnish language training and transportation costs; and

- The cost of obtaining/recognizing qualifications or acquiring professional cards.

Second, unemployment security: a part-time worker may choose suitable integration measures without losing their unemployment benefits.

Also, it could be used for a full-time worker by offering tax relief to newly arrived migrants for covering the cost of Finnish language training or the cost of obtaining/recognizing/updating qualifications.

**My First Job Path:** This path is designed for fostering the employment of newly arrived refugees and for contributing to their integration into Finnish society. As part of the service, employers can get the following:

- A wage subsidy up to 70%-80%;
- Compensation for the cost of obtaining/ recognizing qualifications;
- Compensation for the cost of acquiring professional cards or upskilling training;
- Compensation for the cost of Finnish language training;
- Compensation for the cost of work-related translation service;
- Reward for professional mentoring; and
- A deduction of family reunification costs or family living costs from wage or salary income. This amount does not count as income when calculating the basic social assistance. The deduction is made for a refugee who's still waiting for a family reunification decision from the Finnish immigration service. This kind of deduction is useful for refugees whose primary focus is to work and earn money.

**My First Entrepreneurship Path:** This path is designed for encouraging newly arrived refugees to establish their company and enhancing their integration through entrepreneurship.

Participating in this program will not prevent the refugee from starting/continuing their labor market integration/vocational training provided by the PES office. This program could offer tax relief for covering the following:

- The cost of independent Finnish language training;

- The cost of obtaining/recognizing/updating qualifications;
- Compensation for the cost of acquiring professional cards or upskilling training; and
- Using unemployment benefits to fund their start-up grant for the first year and may pursue business activities for a second year or maybe the rest of the integration period without losing their unemployment benefit.

#### Integration under one roof:

The problem of the mysterious meaning of an integrated person was observed in this study as mentioned above. To solve this problem integration service beneficiaries should not be jumping between the PES Office and the municipality to get integration services. We suggest designing one integrated place for the PES Office, municipality, and other integration service providers. Finland could adopt this by creating (Koto talo) a center by integrate social services for refugees to a One-Stop Guidance Center the Ohjaamo experience.

- Designing Integration One-Stop Guidance Center (Koto-talo) or integration House. Center officers draw, for newly arrived migrants, integration plans that match the views of the municipality and PES Office and provide migrants, in their mother language, information, support, and individual guidance related to training, education, hobbies, housing, employment, and about different types of financial aid and other forms of social support, and about health and mental services.

## 4 RESULTS

The fourth chapter of this study discusses the finding of the study. The first section reviews the major results and answers research questions and discusses results. The second section discusses research practical and theoretical implications, its limitations, and the prospects for future research.

### 4.1 Answering the research questions

Integration is a difficult issue, both conceptually and practically, and when evaluating it within the Finnish context from 2016–2019. It is further complicated by the nature of the government integration action plan that came as a response to the rapid increase in asylum seekers in 2015. Integration has multiple dimensions, and many commonly used integration indicators, particularly those relating to public outcomes, are not relevant because of the restrictions of the asylum and family reunification policy. One integration indicator alone such as employment or acquisition of the Finnish language is not an indication of successful integration.

The main reason for this study is to evaluate the Finnish integration program, and the main question of why the Finnish Integration Program (VALKO II) didn't work. What propositions could be offered from service design to the Finnish policymakers that could be used in the next integration policy and program?

First, in this research, we found that most migrants in this study strongly agree with VALKO II measures.

On 7 November 2018, the Finnish Parliament Audit Committee declared that, at present, the integration policy is not working, and new solutions are needed to remedy the situation. The aim of integration measures must be to achieve adequate social, working, and language skills as a prerequisite for employment. In its report, the committee focused on the effectiveness of integration measures, particularly in terms of promoting the employment of immigrants, since the employment of immigrants reduces the need for support and increases tax revenue. Parliament required the government to ensure that the service systems and structures that support immigrant employment are improved to meet the needs of the companies.

According to this, the goal of the Finnish government for immigrants is effective integration. This concept comprises three major aspects that are the acquisition of the Finnish language, employment, and absorbing Finnish society values. What is expressed in the reasoning behind the goal of integrating is the idea of the “well-integrated” migrant or “good” citizen, as Abdullah (2017) mentions.

Aiming to shape adults into well-integrated migrants, the VALKO II plan was to engage the newly arrived adults in the three main measures of the civic orientation course, integration courses, and employment facilitation.

In this research, 70% of those surveyed believed that integration means knowledge of the Finnish language, employment, graduation from Finnish education institutes, a sense of belonging, and respect of Finnish law. This understating almost harmonizes with the Finnish government goals. But the problem had two parts, first one was different priorities between refugees and the Finnish government, and the second one was VALKO II implementation (a black box of integration measure implementations).

First, it's clear there were different priorities between refugees and the Finnish government regarding family reunification. The Finnish government would like to make Finland less attractive by restricting family reunification policies. But unfortunately, family reunification restriction has a **cobra effect**; it became clear that Finland had fallen into a trap of unintended effects of the restriction of family reunification.

Finnish government policies related to family reunification and citizenship requirements have negatively affected:

- On integration: Delaying integration puts refugees' lives on hold, exposing refugees to human trafficking, black job market, or under-employment, and pushing refugees' families to choose dangerous options for moving illegally to Finland. Also, it affected on engagement's ability in many aspects of the integration process like learning, getting a job, socializing resistance, and overall progression, while its long-term absence negatively affects physical and emotional health like depression and isolation, and lesser feelings of belonging.
- On the success of the Finnish government integration program by changing refugee's new life path in Finland to a long and high cost one as illustrated in Chapter 3 in this research (changing the reason for participating in Finnish integration courses from studying the Finnish language to being forced into a classroom for fear of cutting social benefits and forcing some of the refugees to be language skills demonstration seekers instead of language learners to get Finnish citizenship. Figures 33, 34, and 35 illustrate life steps and priorities before and after the government policy.

We feel strongly that the cost of damage to the Finnish economy and society right now and the cost of repairing unintended effects on society in the near and far

future could be so high. This finding concurs well with OECD (2019) and also confirms earlier research (Strik, de Hart and Nissen 2013; UNHCR research 2013).

- Black box of VALKO II implementation:

The idea of the “well-integrated” migrant or “good” citizen depends on three aspects:

Absorbing Finnish society values:

The most important measure for that is civic orientation courses, which introduced newly arrived migrants to how the Finnish society works and to tell the story of Finland. The civic orientation courses are based on teaching in the participants’ own mother tongues aiming to provide the basic information on the activities and services of Finnish society, working life, the labor market, and also Finnish society values as equality and human rights, laws, and democratic principles. No doubt those courses are so important and useful for newly arrived migrants, but my research discovered unexpected results. For example, about the unexpected result, relating to Finnish society values, during civic orientation courses refugees are made to learn about an idyllic version of society and its shared values that vastly differ from their own lived experiences, as in the case of refugees who learn about justice, equality, and the importance of family but face routine discrimination. During this research, we realized that, in Finland, Syrian refugees feel, they are discriminated against on family reunification applications submitting places between them (Syrian and Iraqis) and other citizens. Also, discrimination on family social benefits paid by The Social Insurance Institution of Finland (Kela) for foreigners, who work in Finland while their family lives outside of Finland. Benefits are different if the foreigner is from the EU, an EEA country, Switzerland, or outside Europe because most are refugees.

Acquisition of the Finnish language:

Learning the language in order to integrate into the host society is the most essential activity performed by every immigrant. It is a very important action for a newcomer to engage and socialize with the locals. Most of those surveyed expressed that the Finnish language plays an important role in one’s life. There is no doubt for them that learning the language is strongly linked to the idea of the “well-integrated” migrant and the only way of obtaining employment. The lack of language is the main reason for unemployment. As Carlson (2002) and Abdulla (2017) show, the language has become somewhat of a mantra in Swedish society. In Finland learning the language and getting a certificate from Finland are the Finnish version mantras for obtaining employment.

We found that VALKO II partly succeeded in reaching its targets.

First, it was able to speed up the integration process by giving the ability to unemployed work aged persons who have been granted international protection to register in the PES Office as a job seeker already in the refugee center even before getting a place in the municipality and by reengineering the process of registration in PES for refugees in some areas. Second, VALKO II was able to reduce the waiting time for integration training between 2014 to 2016 from just over 160 days to 80 days. Third, it has succeeded in reaching annual targets of integration training effectiveness with the unemployment rate after integration training participation (follow-up at three months) see Figure 50.

Immigrant integration education has now been reformed in a more work-oriented direction and focused on sectors with the greatest labor shortages with the aim of accelerating the transition to the labor market. With the increase in funding, integration training was started in 2016 with no major delays. In 2016, more work-oriented and early vocational integration training models were adopted and are currently being implemented. The starting point of the new implementation models has been to accelerate the path to work and postgraduate studies by linking modules according to the target group, such as to vocational studies, entrepreneurship, volunteering, online/distance learning, and other independent study periods between contact hours.

Besides that, no more one-size-fits-all design, new integration training models have been introduced in a more work-oriented direction and vocational capabilities developed and focused on sectors with the greatest labor shortages with the aim of accelerating the transition to the labor market.

Unfortunately, in many cases, the stated target language skill level is not achieved, slightly less than 35% of all the persons who completed their integration training achieved the language skill level B1. Worth noting is that the language skill of people who participated in PES integration courses are slightly better than people who participated in integration independent training.

Some respondents seem to react by disapproving requests for learning the language in a short time and dismissing the effectiveness of courses or their ability to learn the language under current circumstances. Talking about learning language was some kind of imagination for some refugees under their circumstances, for example for one who has delayed the family reunification process and especially for one who needs a secure means of income. One interviewee wondered, "Is it logic for Finland! We could learn the Finnish language easily and our children are still overseas? Have we stone hearts? Are we robots?"

This kind of conditions made learning language as quickly as the Finnish government hoped is some kind of impossible. In other words, they do not resist language learning but the conditions for learning it.

This result besides the misused carrot and stick policy (see Figures 64 and 65) has explained a problem which was reported by the National Audit Office on Integration Training Performance Review Report 2018 of “why the time used by immigrants for training has simultaneously increased although training courses have become shorter.”

#### Employment:

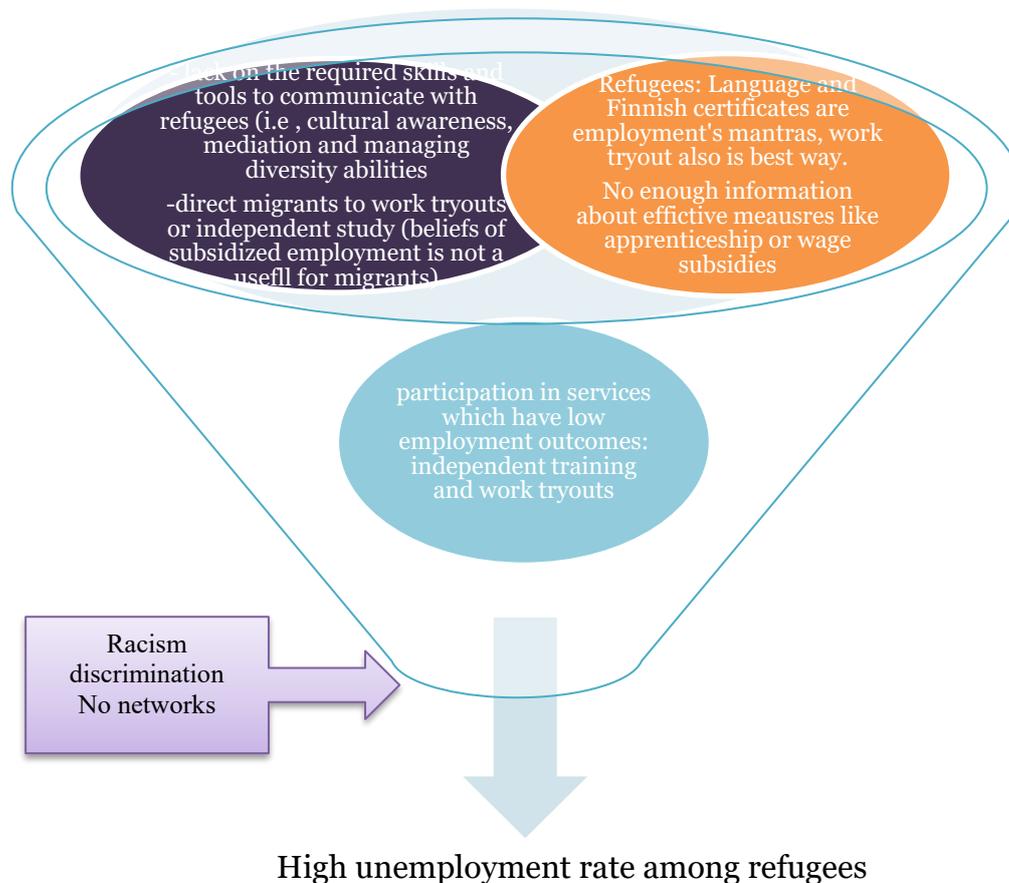
In this research, we found that 70% of those surveyed believed that the main reasons for unemployment among newly arrived refugees are poor Finnish language proficiency, absence of Finnish qualifications, limited networks, racism, and a lack of host-country work experience. These results are in line with earlier research.

VALKO II produced measures to promote immigrants' employment, and as we mentioned before, most of those surveyed strongly agreed with VALKO II's measures.

Employment does not indicate effective integration; alone it is not an indication of successful integration. There is no one effective integration indicator. Integration as a phenomenon encompasses a wide range of dimensions and factors, requiring engagement from both the receiving community and the immigrants themselves. The working life openness influences on immigrants' employment opportunities and employment affects immigrants' social involvement, which is an important contributor to successful integration as explained by Sonja Hämäläinen, Migration Director at the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment” (FMEE 2020b).

The findings of this study indicate that there are some measures and actions as mentioned in the Chapter 3 that conflict with VALKO II implementation goals as the only PES sequential services, misused carrot-and-stick policy, and work tryouts cannot be used to accumulate language skills, and work experience and integration training not counting as unemployment time for eligibility to larger wage cost subsidies. However, the significant problem that slows down employment is that it was rare to steer a foreigner into employment services with high employment outcomes like wage subsidy or apprenticeship because of problems which are twofold. On the one hand, refugees believe in the impossibility of obtaining employment without a Finnish employment's mantras and that work tryouts are the best means to employment. These beliefs come from Finnish

society, employers, different Finnish governmental parties, and the existing refugees' community that has lived for a long time in Finland and has faced many barriers because of the previous reasons. On the other hand, some of PES counselors believe that subsidized employment is not a useful tool for promoting the employment of foreign-born job seekers but rather migrants should be directed to work tryouts or independent study (FMEE 2016). The high unemployment rate among refugees resulting from that problem besides other barriers such as no network, discrimination, and racism (see Figure 71).



**Figure 71.** Reasons of high unemployment rate among refugees.  
 Designed by researcher depending on this study

Refugees want to obtain a qualification in Finland as a guarantee to obtain a job and to build their careers in Finland. This result could explain why vocational training programs or vocational labor market training that do not lead to a vocational certificate are not favorable for newly arrived refugees, or other fast-track programs like the integration SIB experiment, which showed that the project

was best suited for immigrants who have lived in Finland for several years, not for the newly arrived especially for young people (FMEE 2020).

Although integration services improved from one-size-fits-all to a multiway system, it still continues to seem to immigrant people as if they were given prepackaged offers since immigrants have few options. Also, as immigrants, people are readily viewed as immigrants rather than individuals, and deemed, for example, only suited for particular occupations in certain areas of the labor market (Kurki 2018). The findings seem to show that some newly arrived refugees show unexpected reactions or resistance to prepackaged offers and other Finnish government policies and measures, which conflicts with the Finnish governments' goals. For example, resistance to the new family reunification restriction has happened by bringing in family members by illegal means and applying by themselves for asylum in Finland. Also, they show resistance when the carrot-and-stick policy is misused when implemented by some of PES officers to slow down their moving from integration courses to vocational education as long as possible or not trying to find other paths to help them to continue this benefit, as we illustrated in Chapter 3. This result also contributes to giving an extra explanation about the worrying situation in Uusimaa, which is the increase of the number of unemployed persons without a profession or persons whose profession was unknown growing at an accelerating rate since the spring 2019. At the end of July 2019, it was over 17,000. The number has increased by more than 15% compared to the previous year. The share of them in the labor force was 8.5% at the end of December 2019 (Finnish Employment Service Statistics 2019–2020).

After all, we found that the problem is not in the Finnish government program itself, but the problem was different priorities between refugees and the Finnish government's priorities. Also, the problem was with the VALKO II implementation, and this result leads us to the answer for the second question: What propositions could be offered from service design to Finnish policymakers and could be used in the next integration policy and program?

In this dissertation, using service design as a tool for addressing “wicked problems” succeeded and posited refugee's perspective on delivering solutions by erasing that problem:

Improving existing regulations that negatively affected the Finnish integration program and slowed down the integration of refugees and suggesting new regulations and programs for promoting integration:

@ Finnish Immigration Service:

- The family reunification process's time should be maxed at 6 months.
- The Dutch dispensation model regarding language requirements for naturalization should be adopted.
- Income requirements for family members of a person who has been granted a subsidiary protection or other grounds in Finland should be removed.

@ Ministry of Foreign Affairs: Removing discrimination on family reunification application submitting places and giving Syrian/Iraqi refugees a possibility of handling their matters at the embassy of Finland in the country where they reside legally as nationals.

@ The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health/Kela: Rethinking the social benefits system and making it more friendly for families and refugees who are still waiting for a family reunification decision from Finnish Immigration Services by providing a deduction of family reunification cost or family living cost outside of Finland during decision waiting time from wage or salary income. This amount should not count as income when calculating basic social assistance.

@ Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment:

1-Using Integration's golden hour strategy:

- Abandoning the carrot-and-stick policy in its form and forming a new one could be used as a tool for promoting integration not for delaying it.
- Giving an opportunity to use other PES services at the same time would enhance integration voluntary training performance.
- Developing a language bonus by adopting Sweden's model (SFI bonus) would maximize refugees' efforts in learning the language.
- Reforming work tryout regulations would facilitate their use in acquiring language skills and work experience.
- Counting integration training time as unemployment time when calculating wage-subsidized work support would increase eligibility of a high support wage.
- Giving an opportunity for participating in different types of PES services parallel to each other could be an advantage for active people to choose the best or most effective way for maximizing their chances of employment.

- Increasing apprenticeship places and providing refugees sufficient information about them to encourage them to participate in this kind of program as the best measure for fulfilling the goals of the refugees (acquiring Finnish education certificate), employers (professional labor workforces with wage subsidies), and government goals (boosting the employment rate and decreasing the unemployment rate); see Figure 76.

## 2- Creating new paths for promoting integration:

**Self-supported path:** This path could be designed for supporting the part-time working newly arrived refugees to build their integration path by themselves without fear of losing any kind of benefits and designing their integration plan depending on their working-time. Now, they receive an unemployment benefit request to be ready for a full-time job and to join the PES services like integration training. Because of this, during integration time, a customer can't continue with their part-time job when they get integration training or can't quit training to start a part-time job because they will lose his unemployment benefits.

On this path, a customer is responsible for arranging integration/vocational training or other PES measures like an entrepreneurship course, a wage subsidy, or work tryout (if there's any possibility for getting a full-time job from another company or for getting a job corresponding to his qualifications) in parallel to their job.

This path could provide tax relief to a customer for covering:

- The cost of Finnish language training and transportation costs; and
- The cost of obtaining/recognizing qualifications or acquiring professional cards.

Second, unemployment security: a part-time worker may choose suitable integration measures without losing their unemployment benefits.

Also, it could be used for a full-time worker by offering tax relief to newly arrived migrants for covering the cost of Finnish language training or the cost of obtaining/recognizing/updating qualifications.

**My First Job Path:** This path is designed for fostering the employment of newly arrived refugees and for contributing to their integration into Finnish society. As part of the service, employers can get the following:

- A wage subsidy up to 70%-80%;

- Compensation for the cost of obtaining/ recognizing qualifications;
- Compensation for the cost of acquiring professional cards or upskilling training;
- Compensation for the cost of Finnish language training;
- Compensation for the cost of work-related translation service;
- Reward for professional mentoring; and
- A deduction of family reunification costs or family living costs from wage or salary income. This amount does not count as income when calculating the basic social assistance. The deduction is made for a refugee who's still waiting for a family reunification decision from the Finnish immigration service. This kind of deduction is useful for refugees whose primary focus is to work and earn money.

**My First Entrepreneurship Path:** This path is designed for encouraging newly arrived refugees to establish their company and enhance their integration through entrepreneurship.

Participating in this program will not prevent the refugee from starting/continuing their labor market integration/vocational training provided by the PES office. This program could offer tax relief for covering the following:

- The cost of independent Finnish language training;
- The cost of obtaining/recognizing/updating qualifications;
- The cost of acquiring professional cards or upskilling training;
- Using unemployment benefits to fund their start-up grant for the first year and may pursue business activities for a second year or maybe the rest of the integration period without losing their unemployment benefit.

3-Integration under one roof:

Designing Integration One-Stop Guidance Center (Koto-talo/Koto-ohjaamo) or integration House by integrate social services for refugees to a One-Stop Guidance Center, the Ohjaamo experience. Center officers draw, for newly arrived migrants, integration plans that match the views of the municipality and PES Office and provide migrants, in their mother language, information, support, and individual guidance related to training, education, hobbies, housing, employment, and about

different types of financial aid and other forms of social support, and about health and mental services.

## 4.2 Theoretical implications

The topics of migration and integration and their problems are often studied through human and social sciences or economic and political sciences. This is one of the first studies that deals with the issue by using a management science lens to explore the existing problems and find appropriate solutions. In this field of research, this study was the first one conducted using the service design diamond model with a construction approach as a tool to address the “wicked problems.”

The results provided contribute to and extend the literature in this area by experimentally evaluating the theoretical framework created for this study. Past studies on integration in a Finnish environment, together with the findings of this research, have added to the body of literature and provided fresh insights into our understanding of integration research in a Finnish setting.

The purpose of this research is to fill the research gap in previous studies. Because of the lack of research in this area, there is a scarcity of literature on the integration research field conducted by multiple methods with mixed-methods approaches. The results provided contribute to and extend the literature in this area by experimentally evaluating the theoretical framework created for this study. Specifically, past studies on integration in a Finnish context together with the findings of this research have added to the body of literature and provided fresh insights into our understanding about the integration research filed in a Finnish context. The research contributed to let us know more about the integration phenomenon in Finland. It provided a comparative study of the family reunification process, conditions and difficulties between Finland and other western countries, and updated previous research data about it. Also, it observed the transitional changes that occurred in the integration process and integration trainings until it reached the current situation. This research revisited research related to the impacts of labor policy measures and compared these measures to the needs of the refugees. The important contribution was discovering new ground on Finnish integration by opening a black box of Finnish integration services implementation.

Another contribution to the body of knowledge is insights (the migrants’ own perspectives) into an area where there is a lack of scientific research. This was not top-down research; refugees were not research objects. The research evaluated integration service/policy through refugees’ user-satisfaction, reactions, and

experiences, and it illustrated how various policies influence migrants' experiences from the inside.

This study attempts to present a better understanding of the Finnish integration situation during/after the refugee crisis (2015–2019) by analyzing the impact of VALKO II measures on implementing integration.

### 4.3 Managerial implications

The main managerial implication could be introduced as the main contribution of the study, which is the answer to the important questions of why the Finnish government's integration didn't work and what solutions could be offered from service design to Finnish policymakers to be used in the next integration policy and program.

From the results of the research, suggestions and recommendations were shared when we participated in a kick-off event (spring 2019, for launching the initial preparation of the Government Integration Program for 2020–2023) and two inclusive, co-creation workshops (first quarter of the year 2020 to engage the stakeholders more extensively in preparing the Government Integration Program for 2020–2023) organized by the Finnish Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment. Also, the results of this research were sent to the Finnish Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment. Propositions suggested in research could be suitable tools for promoting integration.

The study shows how refugees' participation interacts and contributes to enhancing both the legitimacy and effectiveness of integration policies. The results and findings of this dissertation may help policymakers, integration policy implementers, and integration services providers to better understand refugees' needs and requirements and to implement the most effective strategies, measures, plans, and services.

The results of this dissertation show that refugees' agreement to integration programs offered by governments wasn't sufficient to produce the best results if not taking into consideration the priorities and needs of refugees. Policies will not achieve the desired results if they are resisted in one way or another.

The findings and results of this study added additional value to previous research specifically dealing with forced migrants. Finally, the model presented in this study works well to tackle other problems in public services or even in another area.

#### 4.4 Research limitations

As with any research, this study includes a number of constraints that may impact the conclusions gained and restrict the research capabilities as a whole.

The study was conducted in a Finnish context and was limited by the particular time frame (2016–2019) under certain government integration program measures and legal regulations, so it is not possible to generalize the results to previous time periods in Finland when different programs were implemented or in the future if the existing measures or legal circumstances change. However, parts of the findings may be interpreted by policymakers and researchers as relevant to similar settings in other Western countries.

This research was carried out for the selected target group of the study, newly arrived Arabic speaking adults most of them with refugee backgrounds, so the results may be limited to this category or similar groups; migrants for other reasons should have their own problems and conditions.

As I am independent researcher, the research methodology was labor-intensive; more ideas and concepts might be analyzed by a team of researchers (Whelan 2013).

#### 4.5 Future research prospects

The selected target group of the study was newly arrived Arabic-speaking adults, especially those with refugee backgrounds. It would be interesting for future research to investigate other migrants with other reasons for immigrating. Also, it would be very interesting to study the integration situation for newly arrived refugees under 17 years of age.

There are a few other interesting points that would warrant further investigation. One such point is evaluating integration indicators for refugees and their families who couldn't fulfill the condition of a secure means of support.

Secondly, it's a good idea for doing a comparative study of integration between refugees who underwent measures before and after the changes.

## 5 CONCLUSIONS

Integration is a difficult issue, both conceptually and practically, and when evaluating it in the Finnish context from 2016–2019, it is further complicated by the nature of the government integration action plan that came as a response to the rapid increase in asylum seekers in 2015. Integration has multiple dimensions, and one integration indicator alone such as employment or acquisition of the Finnish language is not an indication of successful integration.

On 7 November 2018, the Finnish Parliament Audit Committee declared that, at present, the integration policy is not working, and new solutions are needed to remedy the situation. The aim of integration measures must be to achieve adequate social, working, and language skills as a prerequisite for employment. In its report, the committee focused on the effectiveness of integration measures, particularly in terms of promoting the employment of immigrants because immigrant employment reduces the need for support and increases tax revenue. Parliament required from the government assurances that the service systems and structures supporting immigrant employment are improved to meet the needs of the companies.

At the March 26, 2019, launch event, the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment asked the D9 team from the population register center to help with preparing a Finnish government integration program for 2020–2023 aiming to improve the quality of work in the preparation phase and as a finished product. The launch event was followed by two inclusive co-creation workshops with stakeholders. But the question of “Why Finnish integration program VALKO II didn’t work?” is still unanswered.

This research evaluated the integration program and answered this question. We found most of the participants of this study strongly agreed with VALKO II measures. Also, 70% of those surveyed believed that integration means knowledge of the Finnish language, employment, graduation from Finnish education institutes, a sense of belonging, and respect of Finnish law. This understating harmonizes with the Finnish government’s goals. So, the problem is not in the Finnish government program itself, but in the different priorities between refugees and the Finnish government and in the VALKO II implementation.

The priority of refugees is the reunification family, but The Finnish government would like to make Finland less attractive by restricting family reunification policies. But unfortunately, family reunification restriction has a cobra effect, it became clear that Finland had fallen into a trap of unintended effects of the restriction of family reunification, and the new policy has delayed integration and

puts refugees' lives on hold, exposing refugees to human trafficking, black job market, or under-employment, and pushing refugees' families to choose dangerous options for moving illegally to Finland. Also affected on engagement's ability in many aspects of the integration process like learning, getting a job, socializing resistance, and overall progression, while its long-term absence negatively affects physical and emotional health like depression and isolation, and lesser feelings of belonging. The new policy changed refugee's new life path in Finland to a long and high-cost one by changing the reason for participating in Finnish integration courses from studying the Finnish language to being forced into a classroom for fear of cutting social benefits and forcing some of the refugees to be language skills demonstration seekers instead of language learners to get Finnish citizenship. VALKO II implementation misused the carrot-and-stick policy, and it was rare to steer foreigners into employment services with high employment outcomes.

Also, this research offered solutions/suggestions for different related government organizations, especially to Finnish Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, for using the integration golden hour strategy by reformulating the carrot-and-stick policy, introducing a language bonus for maximizing refugees' efforts in learning the language, giving an opportunity for participating in different types of PES services in parallel for maximizing their chances of employment, steering refugees into employment services with high employment outcomes like wage-subsidized work, and highlighting the importunity of apprenticeship as the best service could satisfy all. This includes refugees by acquiring Finnish education certificate, employers by providing them professional labor workforces and financial support, and the government by boosting the employment rate and entering refugees into the labor market in a short time. Also, this research offered suggestions to the government for promoting integration by creating new paths for refugees (Self-Supported, My First Job and My First Entrepreneurship paths). The last suggestion was to provide integration services under one roof by designing an integration one-stop guidance center (Koto-talo) that draws integration plans for newly arrived migrants and provides migrants in their mother language with information, support, and individual guidance related to training, education, hobbies, housing, and employment as well as about different types of financial aid and other forms of social support and health and mental services.

Finally, this dissertation is an example of how a service design and construction problem-solving approach can be applied as a tool for addressing "wicked problems" and applying a service design approach such as this will make it possible to position the refugee's perspective more strongly in the center of a ministerial

strategy for work in the future and explain why it is important to emphasize the citizen's perspective in this high-level ministerial work.

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