

Chapter 5. Block 4 Sectoral Measures

Objective 9: Match migrant skills with economic and job opportunities

Context: Improvements and persistent gaps in migrants' access to the labour market

The Swedish economy is growing rapidly with new opportunities arising all the time (OECD, 2017a_[23]). In March 2017, it was reported that 244 000 new jobs had been created between 2008 and 2016. Most of those jobs went to foreign-born individuals, due to the demographic structures in Sweden, where native born in their productive years do not meet demands of labour in a growing and expanding economy (SvT 2017b). However, recent reports are somewhat contradictory with regards to access to the job market for persons with a foreign background. On the one hand, they confirm the division of the Swedish labour market (Arbetsmarknadsekonomiska rådet 2017) only 35% of the migrant population are full-time employed in permanent positions, compared to 61% of Swedish born. In 2016, 33.3% of foreign born on the labour market considered themselves to be overqualified in relation to the position they held, as compared to 17.3% for native born Swedes (SCB 2016). On the other hand, a trend indicates that the level of employment is increasing among those with a foreign background (SCB 2017).

In recent decades, it has been more difficult for refugees arriving in Sweden to find a place in the labour market (Arbetsmarknadsekonomiska rådet 2017: 13), and the employment population ratio among newly-arrived refugees and their families dropped to around 8% in Sweden. However, there are differences in this ratio across the country and the extent to which these migrants move into employment in their first 7-10 years in Sweden. In Västra Götaland, for instance, there is a 30 percentage point difference between the ratio of employed refugee population of those living in Sweden for 0-2 years and those who have lived in Sweden for 7-10 years. In other provinces, this difference is only 20 points (Skåne) whereas in the most high-performing ones the difference across years reaches approximately 43 points difference. The local autonomy in education policy design and implementation is largely behind this success (OECD, 2016_[11]).

Opportunities to move into the job market are related also to the skills and competence of newcomers as low-skilled professions have been decreasing in Sweden in line with a strong digitalisation trend. Recruiters require applicants to have completed at least an upper-secondary school, leaving very little jobs for those who have no or pre-secondary education (Arbetsförmedlingen, 2017). However, the Chamber of Commerce in Gothenburg (OECD interviews 15 March 2017) reported that given the high labour demand some employers (i.e. engineering, etc.) have started lowering their expectations in terms of language skills and accepts applications from English speakers as long as they meet the technical requirements.

It should also be noted, that there is a fairly high proportion of self-employed and small business establishment among the foreign-born, especially among men born in Middle

Eastern countries (Arbetsmarknadsekonomiska rådet 2017). For instance in 2012, 4.8% of Swedish-born men were self-employed; 7.7% of men born in Iran; 11.4% of men born in Syria, and 1.0% of men born in Somalia (Aldén & Hammarstedt 2017).

At regional level, according to the 2016 Report published by the Swedish Public employment service (PES) in the Vastra Gotalands region (Arbetsförmedlingen, 2017), the situation is similar to the national picture. Employment is increasing and there are good opportunities for new entry in the job market. However there is a risk of double polarisation. Geographic labour market polarisation: due to urbanisation and demographic transition causing depopulation in some areas. And a polarisation around most vulnerable groups in the labour market: unemployed with only pre-secondary education, born outside Europe, aged 55-64 years, reduced work skills. In this region, labour shortages are expected in both the short and long term in the following sectors: health services, teachers, engineers and IT, construction and civil engineers, qualified professions in industry, etc. (OECD meeting with Arbetsförmedlingen 16 March 2017).

In the city of Gothenburg, labour market segregation is among the top three most pressing challenges for the municipality. The gap in employment ratio for foreign background and Swedish background population is 22 percentage points. 76.1% of the population were employed in 2014 in Gothenburg. 84.3% of those with a Swedish background had a job, compared to 61.2% of those with a foreign background (see table 7.1). 6.2% of the population of Gothenburg were unemployed in 2014 (see table 7.2); 3.6% of those with a Swedish background and 12.6% of those with a foreign background. The gaps are higher when considering areas in the city characterised by higher presence of persons with a foreign background, reaching 53.9 % in the neighbourhoods with a higher percentage of migrant population such as Angered. Long-time unemployed are overrepresented in areas such as Bergsjön and South Angered (Gothenburg, 2014_[3]).

Table 5.1. Employment rate per district

District	Employment rate	
	Foreign born	Swedish born
Angered	53.9	76.3
Östra Göteborg	52.6	77.2
Örgryte/Härlanda	66.7	86.4
Centrum	64.1	83.5
Majorna/Linné	67.8	83.7
Askim/Frölunda/Högsbo	64.1	84.6
Västra Göteborg	66.1	87.6
Västra Hisingen	59.6	86.8
Lundby	68.4	84.6
Norra Hisingen	68.5	86
Göteborg as a whole	61.2	84.3

Source: Göteborgsbladet 2016.

Table 5.2. Unemployment rate per district in Gothenburg

District	Unemployment rate	
	Foreign born	Swedish born
Angered	16.1	7.3
Östra Göteborg	17.5	5.2
Örgryte/Härlanda	9.6	2.9
Centrum	6.6	2.7
Majorna/Linné	8.3	3.7
Askim/Frölunda/Högsbo	10.2	3.5
Västra Göteborg	11.6	2.8
Västra Hisingen	14.8	3.5
Lundby	9.7	3.5
Norra Hisingen	10.7	3.6
Göteborg as a whole	12.6	3.6

Source: Göteborgsbladet 2016

In Gothenburg, foreign-born workers find employment mainly in the following sectors: construction, health and medical care, whole and retail trade, repair of motor vehicles, transportation and storage, hotel and restaurants and food service activities as well as in the education sector (OECD Questionnaire completed by the city of Gothenburg for this study, 2017).

With respect to refugee integration in the labour market, in Gothenburg only 20% of those who completed the introduction programme continue to study or work after the two years. The municipality is concerned about the long waiting time before recognised status holders can work and they plead for more efficient early measures for newly arrived individuals (OECD meeting with the municipality 16 March 2017).

Labour market policies

The Swedish government is focusing on “employability”, in its current refugee integration efforts and the key instrument is the Introduction programme¹ introduced in 2010². The objective of this integration model is to get status holders into jobs, education or training within two years³. After two years, if the person is not within any of those activities, there are no special measures, but the individual is entitled to the same social support as anyone else in Sweden, for a full description of the activities and benefits available to the unemployed and the social assistance payments see (OECD, 2016^[11])

In Gothenburg, as in the rest of Sweden the PES office⁴ is responsible for all introduction activities for newly arrived adults whilst the municipalities are responsible for providing Swedish language courses for immigrants (SFI), housing, initiatives for children in schools and pre-school as well as civic orientation services (Bakbasel, 2012). National accreditation agencies are tasked with validating their educational and professional experience.

Relevant considerations for fostering refugees’ integration in the labour market at local level

The following key findings relate to the implementation of the introduction programme and as well as to other local activities

- Refugees' skill assessment could be improved across levels. The first step towards making refugees employable is assessing and evaluating previous knowledge, expertise and education (Diedrich & Styhre, 2015). A competence mapping is undertaken by the Migration board in an early stage of the asylum seeking process. However, the PES tends to begin its own evaluation during the first introduction meeting with refugees who received a residence permit. Municipalities often consider they do not enough information on migrants' past education and experience and therefore often repeat the mapping exercise before allocating newcomers to language classes (OECD, 2016^[11]). The support granted while applicants' status is pending is limited to basic language training, but as noted in previous OECD work, these activities could be strengthened and tracked in a centralised database to which municipalities and government agencies have access in order to build upon previous investments.
- Local coordination when identifying introduction activities could be improved. During one or more introduction interviews⁵ at the local PES office, a personalised introduction plan is drawn up. Based on the person's experience, education, interests and ambitions this plan will determine which complementary education and activities, such as internships with employers, the person will be oriented towards. In this exercise, the municipality could be more involved, so as to connect very early PES's tools with municipal offers of vocational training and local capacity to match profiles and offers.
- Local Offer of vocational training: As observed in previous OECD work (OECD, 2016^[11]) education courses provided to refugee job seekers at the same time by the PES and the municipality can result in duplication, and loss in efficiency, which could be avoided through better coordination. Municipalities have experience in training social welfare claimants who are far removed from the labour market⁶, while the PES training offered to refugees during the first two years might not be sufficiently intensive for those who need remedial education in preparation for the labour market. Often, municipalities develop labour market training, targeting established humanitarian migrants claiming social assistance, who no longer have access to the introduction programme. If the municipality was involved since the first interviews with recognised refugees, alongside PES caseworkers in the PES district offices, they could jointly assess the needs and orient those refugees who will have the hardest time finding work towards the most appropriate municipal programmes. Other cities avoid this overlap by establishing one-stop-shops for newcomers (i.e. Start Wien office) where refugees' skills and aspirations are assessed, and they can be oriented towards courses offered by all relevant actors: employment or welfare services or private education. In Amsterdam, the municipality offers tailored support to newcomers through case managers, like in Sweden, but it then directly contracts (private or public) suppliers to assess newcomers' skills and strengthen their capacities through education or vocational courses.
- Links with the private sector at city level: It emerged from interviews with the private sector in Gothenburg that the Introduction programme could benefit from improving its links with the local private sector (OECD meetings 16 March 2017). The PES could improve the information accessible to local businesses with regards to newcomers' competences and strengthen the collaboration with the local branch of the Swedish Chamber of Commerce. As an example, recently a company from the region reported that it published an advertisement for 60 positions and managed to identify enough refugee candidates who match the

requirements. Unfortunately, only four of them could be hired due to bureaucratic obstacles associated with their permits or the distance from the municipality where their residence had been assigned. The Employment agency recognised that due to the high amount of newcomers they could not keep up the quality of the database and regularly share the information on the existing profiles. They are working on this as well as on improving their screening tool. These findings are in line with previous OECD research: while the PES is particularly important for migrants as a job-research method, employers reduced the number of vacancies they notify to the PES database and are reluctant to use the PES to source their candidates as they feel it is unable to identify the requested professional and educational background and lack sufficient industry knowledge (OECD, 2016^[11]). During interviews with the OECD (Meeting City executive council officers, 16 March 2017) the municipality also noted a need for increased cooperation with the private sector. For instance, there seems to be little information on the private sector side about the incentives programme implemented by the Employment services, which pay 80% of an individual's salary for a period of time to businesses that hire migrants. There has been little evidence of the uptake of this opportunity by businesses in Gothenburg, as well as in other Swedish regions such as Småland Blekinge

- Sensitize employers to recruiting employees: some municipal companies such as the city's housing company, has initiated measures to increase refugees' access to the jobs, in cooperation with the employment service. For instance, they offer refugees Swedish classes and an internship within the housing group as well as with subcontractors such as cleaning companies and construction companies.

A study on the effects of the Introduction Act shows small, but significant positive effects on both levels of employment and wage level among the foreign-born. Two years after participating in the Introduction programme, the level of employment was 5.7% higher for those who had taken part in the reform programme than for those who had not. Three years afterwards, the corresponding figure was 7.5%. (Andersson, Joona, Wennemo Lanninger & Sundström 2016).

An overall consideration emerged from interviews with different stakeholders, levels of employment among refugees might increase more quickly if the support would start earlier. As mentioned above, the average time for completion of the settlement process was 239 days, *before* refugee could access the Introduction activities.

Beyond the introduction programme some important initiatives are implemented by Business Region Gothenburg, which is an agency responsible for business development in the City of Gothenburg and represents thirteen municipalities in the region.⁷ Business region implements in partnership with other actors (i.e. city districts, city departments, the Swedish Red Cross, Sahlgrenska Academy of the university of Gothenburg etc.) projects focusing on newcomers who have experience in trading or entrepreneurship. For instance they guide people who have a business concept to get it started through counselling, financing and support.

Another very interesting matching experience is the one implemented between 2015-2016 by the Göteborg Region Association of Local Authorities (GR). 8 municipalities in the Gothenburg region participated in the project together with the regional company Gryaab, to match employers' recruitment needs with the engineering skills of newcomers. After the success of the pilot in 2016-2017 the country administrative board funded a new project - På rätt plats⁸ - involving 10 employers, government agencies, municipalities,

union and trade associations (Aarsleff, Gothenburg City, Gryaab, Kungsbacka municipality, Lerum municipality, Mölndal municipality, Älvstranden Utveckling and WSP). The project proves that internships were effective for enter the labour market (14 employment out of 14 trainees). The project has also revealed that employers' ability to introduce and supervise the interns is very important for a successful integration in the workplace.

Objective 10: Secure access to adequate housing

A general shortage of housing in the larger cities of Sweden constitutes a bottleneck for refugee accommodation, as well as for young adults moving out from parental homes and for international recruitment of labour force and students. This is due to the fact that in Sweden, construction of housing has not kept up with population increases. Deciding what should be built and where is a municipal responsibility, which partially explains the uneven distribution of housing construction and permit requirements across the country. In addition, the planning process for new housing can take up to three years (OECD, 2016^[11]).

Municipal housing companies, which represent a significant share of all rental accommodation in Sweden, manage public housing (i.e. apartments for private rent at reasonable prices). Everybody in Sweden is supposed to cover the rent themselves – no social housing – but there are options to apply for assistance to defray housing costs.

In Gothenburg, the housing shortage worsened markedly in the autumn of 2015 by the arrivals of large numbers of refugees and asylum seekers. However, this was not a new trend. According to the 2016 Gothenburg Economic Outlook (Business Region Goteborg, 2016) housing prices in the city and in the metropolitan region have increased since 2012 - by 9% over one year in 2016. In fact, the Outlook estimates that the shortage of homes and increasing demand, due to significant inward migration, in combination with low mortgage rates that increase real estate demand, will continue to drive prices up in the region for some years. In addition, contained prices in the public housing, and limited new construction led to extreme rental housing shortages and very high rents in the private housing market.

Housing responsibility in the city of Gothenburg

The municipal real estate committee is responsible for the land and housing policy of the City of Gothenburg.

The Real Estate board of the city of Gothenburg creates the conditions for building new housing: identifying land and exploitation; buying, selling and leasing of land; management of land and buildings. Many municipalities, including Gothenburg, have substantial land holdings that give them an important tool to shape land use in their territory either by choosing directly how to build the land they own or by deciding to sell it to private developers (OECD, 2017^[17]). In view of ensuring city sustainability the Property Management committee requires that tenants, who hold the rights to build new housing, ensure that a certain proportion will have low rents.

Access to housing for vulnerable groups in Gothenburg

Compared to other Swedish cities, Gothenburg is an exception as public housing companies still owns 30% of the housing stock whereas other cities have sold their housing stock to private companies. There are four public housing companies in

Gothenburg, all sorted under The Future Concern (Förvaltnings AB Framtiden): a real estate company owned by the municipality, dealing with housing, property management and building of new housing. The public housing companies offer housing for everyone. Rents are collectively negotiated, which keep them lower than the marginal market price. In 2016, there were 40 vacant apartments in the Gothenburg public housing stock, out of a total of 72 338, representing a vacancy level of 0.1%. Those who received a contract in 2016 had had to queue for an average time of 1 606 days (4.4 years) until signing the contract. The city has a cooperation agreement with both the city's housing companies and private housing companies to free a quota of apartments for people who need help with housing for social or medical reasons. The agreement is revised annually. The public housing companies in Gothenburg have themselves decided to set aside a number of apartments for vulnerable groups including people with disabilities, homeless and refugees. In 2014, the city decided on a special venture with the housing company for families with children including new arrivals who had particularly difficult housing conditions.

Housing for refugees

As explained in chapter 4.3 asylum seekers' accommodation is a national responsibility. However, according to the 2016 Settlements Act, housing of those who received a positive response to their asylum seeking application and requested assistance for accommodation, is a responsibility of the municipality where they have been assigned by the Migration agency.

During two years, refugees who participate in the Introduction programme receive housing allowance to be spent on the public or private market. After that time, refugees might receive housing compensation as part of other programmes for labour market participation or as social benefits like all other citizens. There is nothing automatic in the system, but applications are evaluated and judged in accordance with level of income and capacity to provide for oneself and one's family. Particular attention is given to people between 18-24 and families with children registered as living in the county. These allocations are provided through the municipality social security system, and are financed by taxes. For those who live as hidden refugees or who are undocumented, there are no such possibilities.

In 2015, 2 300 refugees were referred to Gothenburg through the national mechanism and 1100 in 2017. Unaccompanied minors were 1 700 in 2015, as compared to 400 in 2014. Housing has been provided for all of them. At the same time, there were 3 000-4 000 new asylum seekers in accommodation organised by the Migration Agency or refugees and asylum seekers who individually arranged their accommodation in the city. In 2017, the municipality estimated that just 40% of status-holders benefitted from accommodation provided by the municipality as the majority found their own housing solutions. As described in Chapter 4.3, the possibility for humanitarian migrants to find individually arranged accommodation is a matter of strong debate in Sweden for its consequences in terms of concentration of large numbers of migrants in specific areas, potentially leading to overcrowded housing, segregation and social exclusion problems (Joyce, 2017).

While the Establishment Unit provides support with bureaucratic procedures to access housing, the Property Management Administration and the Real estate committee of the municipality of Gothenburg had to find solutions for sub-letting apartments for four years to refugees assigned through the national mechanism. After 4 years, the apartment returns to the open system and the tenant must find housing by her/his own means

(Meeting The Future Concern 16 March 2017). Discussion is ongoing in the municipality to foresee what assistance is still needed to find a permanent residence after the four years. The City's housing company Förvaltnings AB Framtiden has a commitment to provide apartments to newly arrived refugees. In 2017 they rented 450 apartments to refugees. 80 apartments in 2017 were provided by privately owned housing companies⁹. Currently, there are 500 apartments in the stock for newcomers. Housing companies had to change their regulation that previously required all tenants to have a minimum income in order to make refugees eligible.

The priority given to refugee to available houses is imposed by the new law that obliges municipalities to provide housing to assigned newcomers. However it has been debated how the allocation of apartments to immigrants affects other groups that are in need of housing as well as the specific need of this group and the fact that other solutions i.e. hostels, hotels will be more costly and far from optimal in terms of integration perspective especially for children. In the words of Gothenburg officials (Meeting Property Management Administration 14 March 2018) this law gives an opportunity and an obligation to the city to control where newcomers are offered housing solutions. So far this had the effect of avoiding concentrating newcomers in neighbourhood which are already segregated and disperse them equally across the city.

In fact, the city had been looking for housing solutions for receiving refugees for some years. In 2014, a strategy for housing of newly-arrived refugees was adopted by the municipal government in order to meet short-term needs (Förslag till strategi för bostadsförsörjning för nyanlända). In partnership with Future Concern, the municipality decided that temporary housing was to be built in Frihamnen for newly arrived, but also for students and apartments to be used by companies. Roughly a third of the stock was to be rented by the municipality, which would in turn rent them out to newly arrived individuals. Those plans have now been scuttled as the project appears to be more expensive than planned and as the building permit has not yet been cleared (GP 2017).

Long-term solutions to increase availability and affordability of housing in Gothenburg

In line with its growing population (4 400 new residents in 2016), Gothenburg's plans for new construction are ambitious in volume and in scope: 80 000 new housing units are planned until 2035. Sustainability is a leading principle in new strategies of urban planning and social aspects are integrated. One of the main projects is located in Älvstranden in the area of formal industrial sites connected to the shipyard industry. Urban planning is concentrated in such areas where the municipality owns the land. These development projects represent clear attempts to combat segregation through creating attractive and affordable housing environments where heterogeneous groups would like to live.

National incentives for creating affordable housing are limited. The municipality incentivizes developers involved in new projects to provide suggestions for how to create a more socially sustainable housing situation. The Future Concern Group, a consortium of public housing companies, is in charge of developing this project. New development projects are financed according to financial regulations established by the municipality. The funding of public housing companies originates partly from rents, partly by return from an increase in value in the public housing stock and partly from credits from the private financial market. In these areas, there will be a mix of apartments for rent and

family-owned houses. The dilemma is how to maintain low costs in new urban housing areas to make them affordable to various swaths of the population.

By building these new areas, the demand for labour and construction workers will increase, creating jobs for newly arrived. As one representative of the public housing companies said: “We now have an opportunity to heal the city”, through building in an inclusive way, while at the same time creating job opportunities for newly arrived (OECD Meeting with public housing companies 16 March 2017).

Objective 11: Provide social welfare measures that are aligned with migrant inclusion

Social welfare

Social assistance in Sweden is allocated by municipalities. Social services are managed by the Social resource management and funded by the state through taxes. This service provides support to the social service office of each district in Gothenburg. Within this service, a specific unit called the Establishment unit (*Etableringsenheten*) provides support for newly arrived enrolled in the Introduction programme, but also for relatives and for unaccompanied minors. The unit offers support and information to those groups with regards to a number of social services: administers their applications for economic assistance, orient them to health suppliers and rehabilitation services and provides information for instance on child support, schooling and preschool (Meeting with Establishment unit 16 March 2017). The existence of a municipal unit intending to help persons in the Introduction programme in finding their way in the system is specific to Gothenburg.

As stated before, the general principle is that everyone, including refugees, should provide for her/himself, so social assistance is only allocated in case their income is insufficient. During the Introduction programme, refugees receive, through the municipality, remuneration from Social Insurance, intended to cover costs of food and other necessities. The remuneration amounts to SEK 308 per day, five days a week, which totals 6 160 SEK per month (€630). There is an additional contribution that can be provided for those who have children, and there are possibilities of receiving assistance for housing costs (see housing section above).

At the end of the introduction programme, refugees will receive the same treatment as every resident who is eligible for social services based on his/her income. Refugees rarely qualify for unemployment compensation because they have rarely worked in Sweden long enough, therefore they largely rely on social assistance, which depends on municipalities as well as housing allocations that are provided through the municipality social security system, and are financed by taxes. EU migrants (EU/EEA-citizens) who are not economically active (seeking employment) only have the right to certain basic/emergency support mechanisms, provided by the municipal social services. If economically active, citizens of EU member states are entitled to social welfare benefits on the same basis as Swedish citizens. Vulnerable EU migrants often lack access to housing, and rely on the support of voluntary organisations and faith-based activities, that offer a number of night shelters.

Health care

Health and medical care is organised by the county council for the Västra Götaland region (VGR). All publicly-funded health care institutions in Sweden offer free health care to everybody who is registered in Sweden and has a social security number.

Access to health care for EU/EEA citizens is unclearly defined and their treatment varies from county to county in Sweden (Dagens Medicin 2016). For EU citizens who live in Sweden but do not plan to apply for healthcare service in Sweden they need to obtain a prior authorisation from that Swedish Social Insurance Agency (Försäkringskassan) and show that the home country is responsible for healthcare costs other than emergency care¹⁰.

Primary care or local health centres offer free medical examination of refugees. This has been offered since 2012 and includes screening for trauma and human rights abuses as well as other medical problems.

Asylum seekers have a right to health care that cannot be deferred, i.e. maternity care, health examination and dental care. They have the right to translation services, free of charge if they do not understand Swedish. Since 2013, undocumented migrants as well as hidden refugees have the right to subsidised health care to the same extent as asylum seekers¹¹. All children up to the age of 18 have the right to full care, as well as dental care, on the same terms as all other children living in the county council where they are seeking treatment.

“Health in Sweden 2017-2018” is a new project within the Västra Götaland region aiming at promoting health for asylum seekers. A main priority is to provide information to refugees about the health system and to work closely with civil society actors in the field of health (OECD Meeting with Health in Sweden 16 March, 2017). In 2017, SEK 10 million were allocated to this project and further financing is planned for 2018, an evaluation took place in autumn 2017 (Information by the Västra Götaland region 22 May 2017).

Some health services in Gothenburg provide tailored assistance for the specific needs of certain refugees and migrants. The Trauma and Crisis Clinic in Gothenburg offers specialised therapy and treatment for trauma caused by the effects of war and torture. In 2016, the clinic was visited by 2 000 individuals and had 300 referrals for crisis and trauma (Meeting with the Trauma and Crisis Clinic, 16 March, 2017). In 2015, the Angered Public Hospital was inaugurated by the regional authority. The purpose of localising a hospital in Angered was to bring health care closer to the inhabitants of this district characterised by a large presence of inhabitants with a migration background. The hospital is specialised in paediatric and child psychiatric services. Furthermore, within the large Sahlgrenska University Hospital, there has been, since 2007, a special team focusing on refugee children, The Child Refugee Team which appears to be a unique feature of health in Gothenburg. The team uses an integrated approach and works also to support other functions of society in helping refugee children.

NGOs operating in the health sector play an important role in Gothenburg. They had an important role for instance in access to healthcare for undocumented migrants, influencing lawmakers and politicians. NGOs collect information on groups that are still excluded from access to health care and try to influence the politicians to change their situation. A good example is Rosengenska, a Gothenburg-based NGO created in 1998 that counts on 200 volunteer health care professionals, doctors and nurses. The NGOs operate in the most vulnerable areas of the city, providing care for undocumented

migrants and hidden refugees. Their work is driven from a rights-based perspective and receives funding from the “Ideational Public Partnership” (IOP) and voluntary sources.

Objective 12: Establish education responses to address segregation and provide equitable paths to professional growth

Sweden’s education system is among the most decentralised in OECD countries. Municipalities on the local level have autonomy in designing policies and practices, which therefore vary to a great extent throughout the country and across schools (OECD 2010: 8). According to OECD recent analysis, although the municipalisation reform started 20 years ago the perception of responsibility is still not entirely clearly defined between the national and municipal level and within municipalities themselves: “municipalisation of schooling has shifted many responsibilities to municipalities without accompanying this shift with corresponding support for capacity building or necessary human and financial resources” (Blanchenay, Burns and Köster, 2014^[24]).

Municipalities are in charge of primary and secondary schools. In Sweden, there is a strong tradition of independent learning institutions, providing education in a number of fields to all groups in society. Independent schools are outside of the municipal system although Swedish legislation stipulates that the municipalities are to allocate grants to the independent schools according to the same principles the municipality use when distributing funds to its own schools (Education, 2016^[25]). Independent schools are obliged adhere to national curriculum and upper secondary programme objectives. The difference is limited to the subjects the schools offer: independent schools tend to have more specialised profiles whereas public schools usually cater to either arts or sports interests (Blanchenay, Burns and Köster, 2014^[24]). Independent schools are mostly structured as a collection of small-scale providers and large-scale school companies with multiple sites (OECD, 2015^[26]). In this context, where funding is largely dependent on municipal budgets, education and professional development strategies as well as policies for students with a migration background largely depend on local rather than national prerogatives (OECD, 2015^[26]).

Given the clear understanding that municipalities have of the size and composition of their student population, local policies can more strategically address education gaps. For instance, previous OECD work (OECD, OECD Reviews of migrant education. Sweden, 2010) highlighted the role of municipalities in building capacities of school staff to meet the specific needs of immigrant students and their parents. In particular, it recommended that teacher education and training include priority components such as formative assessment, action-research, second language acquisition, and intercultural education. Through such universal measures, not only immigrant students but also native students will benefit. However, recent evidence (OECD, 2015^[26]) clearly shows wide variations across municipal capacity to provide the kind of recruitment, induction, mentoring, and continuing professional development necessary to support sustained improvements in teaching. Thus, efforts are needed to have a strong focus on monitoring and evaluation of professional development programmes at national level to reduce inequalities in the quality of the education profession.

Gaps in educational outcomes and attainment

Overall, migrant children in Sweden have lower educational outcomes compared to their native peers, while the largest disparities between the two groups are more visible in upper secondary education. However, in line with the results of The Swedish National

Agency for Education (*Skolverket*) reports, OECD research (OECD 2010) suggests that results in school are increasingly linked to socioeconomic preconditions (*Skolverket* 2012), i.e. parents' level of education is of greater significance to a student's grades than whether or not the parents have a Swedish or foreign background.

In general, pupils who were born in Sweden and whose parents were also born in Sweden, are more likely to access post-secondary education than pupils born outside of Sweden or with a foreign background (OECD 2017) (OECD, 2016^[27]). Immigrant students have higher expectations to complete tertiary education in Sweden (when accounted for socio-economic background and academic performance) than in other OECD countries, though this does not mean that they have the skills to do so (OECD, Forthcoming^[28]). In addition, success at school also depends on the age at arrival: gaps in educational outcomes are especially pronounced for immigrant students who have arrived after the age of 12 (OECD, Forthcoming^[28]). According to a recent OECD report, almost 38% of migrants between 15 and 24 years of age who had arrived in Sweden after they turned 15 were not in any educational activity. This is the highest figure for OECD countries (OECD 2017).

In 2015, in the city of Gothenburg the gaps in educational attainment between native and foreign born population remained significant. Some 33% of the Swedish-born population in the city had a post-secondary education of three years or more, while this is twice less common among people with a foreign background (23%). People with a migration background who only have primary education are double (21%) of those with a Swedish background (10%) (see Key Statistics). However, the gap between native and foreign born in entering higher education is evening out in Gothenburg: in 2012/13, the percentage of foreign born young adults entering postsecondary education in Gothenburg was 45%, even slightly higher than among youth with a native background (44%). Large variations remain per country of origin, with a higher proportion of tertiary students among those originating from Iran, Bosnia and Iraq and a lower share among youth from Somalia or with Somali background (UKÄ/SCB 2014).

School Segregation issues

According to OECD work (OECD 2010) (OECD, 2015^[29]) (OECD, Forthcoming^[28]), immigrant children in Sweden often concentrate in certain schools. Gothenburg is no exception, pupils' results are increasingly related to the neighbourhood where the school is located, to socioeconomic conditions and to family background. Parents' freedom of choice of their children's schools might be a factor contributing to school segregation as wealthier parents can choose more high-performing schools for their children, while those options are limited for disadvantaged, immigrant families who mostly choose the schools based on location and availability of financial aid rather than teaching quality (OECD 2017) (OECD, Forthcoming^[28]). This is a contentious issue in Sweden, and there are discussions on how to change this situation.

As shown in the investigation of living conditions conducted by the city in 2014 (Gothenburg, 2014^[3]: 106), there are large variations in school results between districts, but even larger between different basic units within a same district. In Bergsjön (in the district of Östra Göteborg), a district with a high concentration of population with migration background, only 66% of the girls and 56% of the boys were eligible for secondary schooling in 2013 (see table 7.3), as compared to 100% of the girls and 71 and 82% respectively of the boys (Göteborgs stad 2014: 54) in Kärrdalen/Slättadamm and Norra Älvstranden.¹² However the report also showed that around half of all students who

have parents with a low level of education fail to qualify for high school and the level of education of the parents is of greater significance to a student's grades than whether the parents have a Swedish or a foreign background.

Table 5.3. Percentage of pupils eligible for at least vocational secondary education per district

District	Percentage of pupils eligible to at least vocational secondary education
Angered	69.2
East Göteborg	68.9
Örgryte/Härlanda	89.8
Centrum	91.0
Majorna/Linné	87.4
Askim/Frölunda/Högsbo	88.1
Västra Göteborg	87.5
Västra Hisingen	82.3
Lundby	82.8
Norra Hisingen	85.1
Göteborg as a whole	82.2

Source: Göteborgsbladet 2016.

Some neighbourhoods in Gothenburg are characterised by higher levels of post-secondary education attainment: while in North Angered, only 12% of the population had a post-secondary education of three years or more, the same figure for Stora Sigfridsplan was 51% (Göteborgs stad, 2014: 91).

The large influx of refugees during 2014 and 2015 aggravated the level of school segregation in the city as 15 schools out of a total of 161 in the Greater Gothenburg area bore the brunt of accepting newly arrived children. In those 15 schools, more than 20% of the pupils were newly arrived in 2016. Those 15 schools were situated in the Northeast and in Frölunda/Tynnered (Göteborg direkt 2016). Pupils' concentration in just a few schools is to a certain extent one of the unintended consequences of the fact that asylum seekers organise living conditions by themselves (*egenordnat boende*), which does not encourage a more equitable distribution across districts. The municipality has ranked among its top priorities achieving a more even distribution of newly-arrived students across schools in the city and streamline refugee pupils' reception in preschools and schools (OECD meeting with the municipality, 16 March 2017).

Responses to educational challenges

Access to school:

Since 2013, all children in Sweden between the ages of 6 and 18 have a legal right to attend school, irrespective of their migration status (Education, 2016_[25]). Children arriving from other countries¹³ are integrated into the national school system, either in primary or secondary schooling, depending on age, with a focus on language learning. Schools have the obligation to assess students' skills within two months after arrival (International, 2017_[30]) and the National Agency for Education has the assignment to produce mapping material and assessment material so that schools can measure the pupils' knowledge and skills (Education, 2016_[25]). For children enrolled in public schools it is obligatory to participate in regular Swedish classes or Swedish as a second language class. Government grants have also been introduced for extended learning time

in Swedish for newly arrived immigrant pupils (Education, 2016_[25]). In the upper-secondary school, there are special programmes for newly arrived pupils, but when the language introduction is completed, those pupils join the general classes. All children also have the right to develop both the Swedish language and their mother tongue according to national policies. Education in the mother tongue is offered and is the responsibility of the municipalities.

There are several initiatives from different civil society organisations providing children in primary and secondary schools, in particular students with migration background, with extra support classes and help with their homework and studying. Funding is available for these associations from different local authorities: district authorities, the Social resource management of the municipality and the County Administrative Board.

Measures against school segregation:

As previously indicated by OECD work, municipalities could allocate funding to schools on the basis of multiple indicators – instead of a single indicator – such as the proportion of students with low performance, with parents with low levels of education, and different home language (OECD 2010: 8) (Education, 2016_[25]). Increased funding should reduce gaps in the quality of education across schools and potentially attract a more mixed student population. Further according to the Swedish ministry of education incentives should be created so that the best teachers teach in the most challenging schools (Education, 2016_[25]). Additionally support could be offered to migrant parents to better orient them when they choose the school for their children. The municipality of Gothenburg is implementing a set of measures against school segregation. For instance it offers advice to parents in who live in socioeconomic poor areas to choose school in another area. Also schools who have a low share of newly arrived need to prioritise enrolment of newcomers over other students.

The situation in Gothenburg presents similarities with the one analysed in the Amsterdam case study, comparative analysis and exchange of practices around this issue could be beneficial for both cities. Municipalities in the Netherlands tried to tackle school selection mechanisms to influence the parental choice system. For instance, some municipalities in the Netherlands (i.e. Nijmegen, etc.) have introduced a central subscription system to assign students to primary schools, in order to reach a share of 30% of disadvantaged students in each school. In other cities (i.e. Rotterdam), crowded schools have been required to give preference to children who would enrich their ethnic and socio-economic mixes.

Learning the language:

Migrant children learn Swedish in school. Language classes for adults are provided within the Swedish for immigrants (sfi) programme. All migrants, regardless of reasons for migrating to Sweden, are eligible to participate in sfi. For newcomers refugees enrolled in the Introduction programme the responsibility for sfi lies with municipalities, which are funded by the central government for 2 years. In the spring of 2017, there was a shortage of sfi teachers in Gothenburg. Municipalities implement the sfi through different stakeholders including non-governmental organisations. For instance, the People's University (*Folkuniversitetet*) is an independent learning institution, specialised in different areas, that is connected with universities. Amongst its offer of adult education courses, funded by the municipality, it provides Swedish for immigrants. Furthermore, the University of Gothenburg has recently started a course in Swedish for newly arrived,

in order to enable former university students to meet the language requirements to be eligible for higher education in Sweden.¹⁴

Studies showed that good knowledge of Swedish increases the likelihood for newcomers to find work and higher pay. However, several studies have concluded that the education in SFI is not working as intended (DELMi, 2017^[15]).

Access to Higher education:

In order to facilitate paths to higher education, or work in the academic sector, for young newcomers the municipality of Gothenburg, the county government and the Västra Götaland region cooperate with the University of Gothenburg and the Employment Agency. These initiatives target newcomers with aspirations to proceed into tertiary education: prior students with interrupted university studies or university teachers and scholars wishing to continue to pursue an academic career. Cooperation occurs through joint activities such as: providing for internships, Summer school for refugees, and information meetings for newly arrived individuals with an interest in higher education.

Adult complementary and vocational education:

The Swedish adult education system, which also applies to individuals who would be ineligible for university training, offers a large variety of measures for adult migrants and newly arrived individuals so they can improve their qualification. Some of those opportunities are universal adult education offered to all persons in need to fill in gaps in secondary education: complementary education, adult education, vocational education, etc. This flexibility was particularly needed given the diversity of profiles of the newcomers. In terms of educational attainment among the new arrivals in recent years, there is a contradictory pattern. In 2014, over 30% of humanitarian migrants arriving in Sweden held some form of tertiary degree, while others bring only very basic levels of education and . In the same year, 37% of humanitarian migrants held only a primary or lower-secondary education (OECD, 2016^[11]).

One example of post-secondary vocational education accessible to the general public, is called Higher Vocational Education, with several hundred different programmes and designed to fit competence needs in the labour market. In 2010, 20% of those who initiated studies within the Higher Vocational Education were of foreign origin (Myndigheten för yrkeshögskolan 2011). The Higher Vocational Education is organised by different actors, for example private educational companies, municipalities, counties or universities/colleges. The National Agency of Higher Vocational Education must grant validation for each programme.

One rather specific form of adult education provided by organisations, foundations or NGOs is called “folk high school” (*folkhögskola*). The Västra Götaland region runs and finances six such schools, including Gothenburg’s folk high school. Their intention is to fill in deficiencies in secondary education, or provide opportunities in new directions for individuals, who are experiencing schooling delays or are past the schooling age. Often, they are organised as boarding schools.

Complementary (supplementary or bridging) education has existed in Sweden since the 1990s (DELMi, 2017^[15]) and targets foreigners who are registered in Sweden and have a professional qualification from a tertiary education institution in her/his country of origin. In fact previous evaluations had indicated that the validation of professional qualifications (see paragraph below) worked better if accompanied by extra training at school or at the

workplace. People who completed these courses are more likely to find work. Chances are higher for those with a specific vocational college or university degree rather than general degree (DELMi, 2017^[15]). Complementary education is organised by universities and offered in regulated professions that require some kind of licence or registration to work in that field (for example health professions, lawyers, veterinarians, economics, psychology, biomedical scientists, dentist, electricians, security guards and social workers). For example, complementary education in health professions is targeted towards non-EU citizens who hold a degree in medicine.

In 2016, the Fast Track initiative was introduced by the Swedish government and offered to skilled immigrants with qualifications in shortage occupations (20 professions have been identified including: pharmacists, dentists, nurses, physicians, teachers, etc.) complementary education in their mother tongue. The decision to provide education in migrants' mother tongue for specific occupations recognises that language requirements should not be a reason for delaying migrants, particularly skilled ones, from entering the labour market (OECD, 2016^[11]). This is in line with the consensus during OECD interviews in Gothenburg with private sector representatives who are ready to accept migrants who only speak English for professions where there are labour shortages (i.e. construction, engineering sectors, etc.). Newly arrived individuals receive information about Fast Track and recognition opportunities within the establishment programme. For instance, a fast track course for teachers is offered in Gothenburg, where parts of the education are offered in Arabic. Also, the Småland Blekinge region implemented in 2017 a "fast track for health professionals" programme, which validates foreign exams and competencies (OECD, Monitor of Smaland Blekinge review 2018, forthcoming). In particular, the Kalmar county council, which is responsible for publicly-funded health care, has a "fast track" for validation to absorb refugees with professional training in health care as doctors, nurses, pharmacists, laboratory personnel, dentists, (Sveriges Kommuner och Landsting, 2018^[27]). They scout out the newly arrived individuals long before they receive their permit of residence and schedule training, internship, validation and other assistance in order to speed up the legal process. In addition, Emmaboda municipality in Kalmar county is leading a project called "Ny resurs" (New resource) to support refugees and other newly arrived individuals with a university degree or similar training (Ny resurs, 2018^[26]).

Assessment and recognition of foreign qualifications:

Validation of competence has been included in Sweden integration policy since the early 2000s (DELMi, 2017^[15]). Foreign education is validated by a national authority, the Swedish Council for Higher Education (UHR) created in 2013. This serves as one-stop-shop for all types of qualifications and is responsible for the assessment and recognition of foreign upper-secondary, post-secondary, and tertiary education for labour market purposes in unregulated professions and for teachers. Information about recognition procedure is part of the regular introduction scheme for newly arrived migrants (OECD, Making integration work: assessment and recognition of foreign qualifications, 2017).

Box 5.1. Regional association's efforts to enhance diploma recognition

Together with four other sub-regional associations and the Region, the Gothenburg Regional Association set up an organisation called Validering Väst (Validation West). This organisation works with various stakeholders (including the Employment agency) in order to help individuals receive documented proof of their skills (e.g. as an electrician or a builder, etc.) so that they can work in specific professions that require a license or formal education -to be released by Swedish Council for Higher Education (UHR)-. One of their goals for 2017 is to create conditions so that newcomers to Sweden can have their practical skills "made visible" and documented.

Notes

¹ As described before this is special support offered to refugees, resettled refugees, in need of protection or relatives of any of these individuals who have received a residence permit between 20-64 years of age. Persons between 18 and 20 without parents in Sweden are also entitled to these activities. Participation is voluntary and the person needs to register with the Swedish Tax Agency to obtain a personal identity number in order to enrol.

² Introduction act (<http://www.notisum.se/rnp/sls/lag/20100197.htm>)

³ During this time, beneficiaries receive the introduction benefit, which consists of the same package across the country, and is contingent on attendance of the activities. On average, the benefit provides €33 (SEK 308) per working day, and up to a maximum additional SEK 4 500 per month for those with children.

⁴ Labour market policies and the responsibility of assisting people struggling to find a job lie with the Public Employment Service Arbetsförmedlingen (PES), a central government authority. Local PES offices are present throughout the country: people already living in Sweden, with a work or resident permit, can register as a jobseeker. PES offices can offer a variety of tools and advice to help jobseekers find work.

⁵ An interpreter is usually available.

⁶ As part of the municipal welfare services, municipalities are responsible for the labour market integration of most vulnerable groups (i.e. unemployed with only pre-secondary education, born outside Europe, aged 55-64 years, reduced working abilities, etc.).

⁷ <https://www.businessregiongoteborg.se/en/about-us>.

⁸ <http://www.grkom.se/toppmenyn/dettajobbargrmed/miljoochsamhallsbyggnad/projekt/kompetensmatchningsmodellen/parattplats.4.38eb075115f4e76ea5b3059.html>

⁹ In 2016, 830 newly arrived individuals and unaccompanied asylum-seeking minors were accommodated. Some 500 were offered sublease contracts through the public housing companies and 150 were staying in mobile camping vans at Lilleby campground. Another 100 stayed in other temporary and preliminary premises including rented accommodations from private actors. Around 80 persons were staying in dormitories. In addition, some residents in Torslanda engaged in the reception process and developed contacts between residents and newly arrived individuals (Additional information provided by the City Executive Office, 9 May 2017).

¹⁰ <https://www.1177.se/Vastra-Gotaland/Regler-och-rattigheter/Vard-av-personer-fran-andra-lander1/>

¹¹ <https://www.1177.se/Vastra-Gotaland/Other-languages/Engelska/Regler-och-rattigheter/Vard-i-Sverige-om-man-ar-asylosokande-gomd-eller-papperslos/>

¹² There are in general in Sweden large variations between boys and girls when it comes to school results.

¹³ For children arriving from EU/EEA countries who stay less than three months municipalities don't have the obligation to provide them with schooling but Gothenburg offer them access to their schools.

¹⁴ Applicants must have strong Swedish and English language skills in order to be accepted to university.

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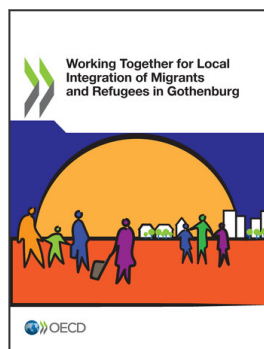
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