Integration in Sweden

A qualitative study of immigrant women and their journey to integrate into the Swedish society.

Paper within Political Science
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The study goes out to all the people who struggle every day to become part of something completely unknown to them. My message to them is that never give up. The more you engage into learning, the more knowledge you will gain. This is the only way to fight the battle.

- Minaz Sadikot
Acknowledgement

The result of this study rests on the shoulders of numerous people who have contributed to this final product.

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To all of you who have been involved. Thank you!

Minaz Sadikot,
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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to identify the problems that non-Swedish women face when attempting to integrate into the Swedish society. The investigation seeks to scrutinize the aspects that facilitate in this process and whether the administrative authorities responsible for handling matters of integration does so in an efficient way?

This is a qualitative study where a qualitative ‘bottom-up’ approach has been implemented. The study revolves around five interviews that have been conducted with immigrant women, who have narrated their situation from which a number of aspects have been chosen to highlight the integration problems existing in Sweden.

The factors that have been identified in the study are: ‘cultural differences’, ‘gender roles’, ‘discrimination’, the importance of the language’, residential segregation’ and ‘the roles of the administrative authorities’.

The empirical evidence drawn from the before mentioned interviews has been combined with theoretical material in order to strengthen the credibility of the study.

The thesis ends with a concluding discussion where emphasis has been put on evaluating the findings of the thesis and aiming to provide an answer to the research question(s).

The conclusion and thus the results of the study display that the Swedish government has indeed taken measures to improve the situation. Yet, issues such as societal and institutional discrimination, residential segregation and cultural barriers between groups remain evident, creating immense difficulties for the immigrants to become part of the Swedish society.
**Abstrakt**

Syftet med denna studie är att identifiera de problem som invandrarkvinnor möter i integreringen i det svenska samhället. Undersökningen ifrågasätter de aspekter som underlättar icke-svenska kvinnors integrering i det svenska samhället och om de administrativa myndigheterna hanterar integrationsfrågorna på ett effektivt sätt?

Detta är en kvalitativ studie, där en “bottom-up-strategi” har tillämpats. Studien kretsar kring fem intervjuer som har genomförts med invandrarkvinnor, som har återberättat sin situation från vilket ett antal aspekter har valts för att lyfta upp de integrationsproblem som har uppstått i Sverige.

De faktorer som har identifierats i studien är: "kulturella skillnader", "könsroller", "diskriminering", betydelsen av språket, "boendesegregation" och de "administrativa myndigheternas roller".

Den empiriska delen har kombinerats med den teoretiska för att stärka trovärdigheten i studien. Uppsatser avslutas med en sammanfattande diskussion där vikt har lagts på att utvärdera resultaten av uppsatsen och syftar åt att tillhandahålla ett svar på frågeställningarna.

Slutsatsen av denna studie påvisar att den svenska regeringen förvisso har vidtagit åtgärder för att förbättra situationen, men att frågor så som samhällelig- och institutionelldiskriminering, bostadsegregation och kulturella barriärer mellan grupper fortsätter att existera, vilket skapar svårigheter för invandrare och nyanlända att bli del av det svenska samhället.
# Table of Contents

## 1 Introduction

1.1 Background ................................................................. 1
1.2 Problem ......................................................................... 2
1.3 Research delimitation ...................................................... 4
1.3.1 Territorial delimitation .................................................... 4
1.4 Research question and purpose ......................................... 5
1.5 Contribution of the research and its importance .................... 5

## 2 Methodology

2.1 Analytical framework ......................................................... 7
2.1.1 Grounded theory ............................................................ 8
2.1.2 ‘Bottom-up’ vs. ‘Top-Down’ ............................................. 9
2.1.3 Explanatory or descriptive theory (inductive and deductive approach) ................................................................. 9
2.1.4 Qualitative methodology .................................................. 10
2.2 Method of the research conducted ....................................... 10
2.2.1 Literature review for background ..................................... 10
2.2.2 Identifying the ‘For Whom’- group .................................... 10
2.2.3 Methodological Scheme for Constructing and Organising Interviews ........................................................................ 11
2.3 Obstacles to carry out the research ...................................... 11
2.4 Difficulties to identify each actor’s responsibility ................... 12
2.5 Making contact with the interviewed and conducting the interviews ............................................................................. 12

## Part 1

## 3 The Swedish Public Employment Service

3.1 Organisation model .............................................................. 14
3.1.1 Operative department ....................................................... 14
3.1.2 Departments ................................................................... 14
3.2 What is their service? .......................................................... 15
3.3 Two new assignments .......................................................... 15
3.4 The introduction and the integration department .................... 15

## 4 The transformation of responsibilities (from the municipality to the SPES)

4.1 An experiment: to implement the new proposal ....................... 16
4.2 The new reform in detail ...................................................... 16

## 5 Important concepts

5.1 Assimilation ...................................................................... 18
5.2 Integration ......................................................................... 19
5.2.1 Three explanations to integration ................................... 19
5.3 Segregation ...................................................................... 21
Part 2

6 Short information about the respondents ............................................. 24

Important Aspects ................................................................................. 26

7 Cultural Differences ............................................................................... 26
7.1 What happens when two cultures clash? ........................................... 28

8 Gender roles ......................................................................................... 29
8.1 The role of women in the family ......................................................... 30

9 Discrimination ..................................................................................... 31

10 The importance of the Swedish language ........................................... 34
10.1 Personal responsibility and determination ....................................... 36

11 Residential segregation ...................................................................... 38
11.1 ‘Miljon programmet’ ......................................................................... 38
11.2 Discrimination in the housing market .............................................. 40

12 The role of the administrative authorities ........................................... 41
12.1 What are their responsibilities? ....................................................... 41
12.2 The story of the respondents’ .......................................................... 43
12.3 What has been the result? ................................................................. 46
12.4 The dilemma of the authorities to support highly educated immigrants ........................................... 47

Part 3

13 Concluding discussion ........................................................................ 50
13.1 What aspects facilitate for non-Swedish women to integrate into the Swedish society? ................................................................. 50
13.1.1 Cultural clash and the role of women in different cultures .......... 50
13.1.2 Discrimination ............................................................................. 51
13.1.3 The language and self-determination ......................................... 52
13.1.4 Housing segregation .................................................................. 52
13.2 Do administrative authorities handle integration issues in an efficient way? ................................................................. 53
13.3 What can be done to improve the present situation? ....................... 54

14 Future research .................................................................................. 55
### 1 Introduction

#### 1.1 Background

“The goal of the integration policy is to ensure equal rights, obligations and opportunities for all, irrespective of their ethnic and cultural background. The policy goals are to be achieved mainly thorough general measures for the whole population regardless of country of birth or ethnic background. The general measures are supplemented by the targeted support for the introduction of newly arrived immigrants in their first years in Sweden”

(Regeringskansliet, 2009).

As simple as this may sound, the more complex it is to actually apply the integration policies in reality. One of the current issues that politicians in Sweden are dealing with is why it takes unnecessarily long time for immigrants to get a job. This investigation is thus based on this contemporary social concern, which will be examined more closely.

**Swedish integration policy**

The main strategy to achieve these ends is by general measures for the whole population, no matter birth country or ethnic background. A new strategy has been introduced in Sweden that supports newly arrived immigrants in their first years in the country. In September, the government of Sweden took the decision to work out a two-year strategy programme that identifies seven areas of concern in order to achieve the goals:

- Faster introduction for new arrivals
- More in work, more entrepreneurs
- Better results and greater equality in school
- Better language skills and more adult education opportunities
- Effective anti-discrimination measures
- Development of urban districts with extensive social exclusion
- Common basic values in a society characterized by increasing diversity

(Swedish Integration Policy, 2009, p. 1).

The focus of the strategy is to increase the supply and demand of labour, and to create quality and equality in schools, which are necessities for the economy to flourish.

**Who takes the responsibility?**

In Sweden the responsibility is divided between agencies, ministries and governmental organs. All these actors are responsible for their own departments regarding issues of integrating. One example is the ministry of Employment that provides aid to support and integrate unemployed into the labour market. Another example is the Swedish Public Employment Service (henceforth will be referred to as the SPES), which provides support to unemployed, regardless of background. Another main department is the Ministry of Integration and Gender Equality, under the leadership of Integration Minister Nayamko Sabuni, who has the responsibility to coordinate the Government’s integration work. Some areas of their concern are:
• “The introduction of new arrivals to Sweden
• Swedish citizenship
• combating discrimination and racism
• the promotion of democracy and human rights
• the development of urban districts with extensive social exclusion
• follow-up and evaluation in the area of integration”

(Swedish integration policy, 2009).

1.2 Problem

Current integration issues in Sweden

The current issue in Sweden is to integrate new arrivals. Special emphasis has been put on newly arrived refugees and people who are in need of protection. Nyamko Sabuni claimed in her speech "Integration of New Arrivals - Incentives and Work in Focus", that there are two ways to describe migration and integration process (Sabuni, 2009). First of all, "immigration has contributed to European development-to diversity and competitiveness" (Sabuni, 2009). Secondly, without migration, Sweden and the rest of Europe would have had been poorer both economically and socially. However, the challenges of migration concerns primarily the

“unemployment among immigrants. Inadequate language skills. The clash of cultures and traditions. Crime and general widespread exclusion”

(Sabuni, 2009).

Sabuni argues that many immigrants have in general been associated with crime. There have been cases not only in Sweden, but the rest of Europe where suburban youths have committed violent acts. For instance in recent years, Sabuni argues that people have set fire to cars and injured police officers with the use of firefighters and stones.

In consequence a new programme, named the Stockholm Programme has recently been debated and adopted. The programme strives to uphold security, freedom and justice. The programme

“define the framework for EU police and customs cooperation, rescue services, criminal and civil law cooperation, asylum, migration and visa policy for the period 2010-2014”

(Ministry of justice, 2009).

The Minister further states that ‘how easily’ immigrants integrate vary from country to country. Much depends on the adoption of the native language. This goes hands in hands with
“whether they have a knowledge of the prevailing culture or not. Depending on whether they come as labour migrants or as refugees” (Sabuni, 2009).

According to Sabuni (2009), following the trends in Europe, to improve integration, core areas have been emphasized such as: employment, education, social inclusion and active citizenship. Unfortunately, for newly arrived immigrants, to get employment is very difficult. About 30 per cent have a job after three years in Sweden, but some struggle for up to seven years, which means that about fifty per cent succeed in finding a job within seven years whereas the rest have to continue with their struggle to become part of the labour market.

**Initiatives taken for newly arrivals**

In order to improve this situation, the Government of Sweden presented a Bill in the autumn of 2009, proposing reforms (Government Reform to speed up the introduction of newly arrivals, 2009). The incentive with such a proposal is to speed up the introduction to working and social life for newly arrived immigrants. The Bill strives at increasing both the work and activity so that the division between the agencies will be clarified and the skills of the immigrants can be recognized (Government Reform to speed up the introduction of newly arrivals, 2009).

Sabuni states that the system is based on the needs and abilities of the individual, not depending on the support that the municipality can offer (Sabuni, 2009). The state via the SPES, collaborates with the newly arrived to provide this support.

Each and every individual is given the opportunity to tailor their own introduction plan together with the SPES. The plan takes into consideration previous education and work experience and should always contain courses in “the Swedish language, civic orientation and employment preparation activities” (Government Reform to speed up the introduction of newly arrivals, 2009).

**Area of investigation**

There are many immigrants living in Sweden, who are here due to several different reasons. The immigrants that live in Sweden today are many. And it is estimated that about 14 per cent of Sweden’s 9.3 million inhabitants were born in another country. The proportion of the Swedish population with foreign background is compared to those of the USA and Germany, and it is higher than the UK, France and the Netherlands (Sweden Integration Policy, 2009).

During the 50’s, 60’s and 70’s there were many people who came to Sweden to work. Most people were from Finland, southern Europe and Turkey. After the 70s, many refugees came from Latin America and East Asia, and subsequently more people came from the Middle East and Africa. Ever since Sweden became a member of EU in 1995, immigration increased from the rest of the EU and EEA countries as well.

Some of the largest immigrant groups in Sweden are from

- Finland (175 000)
- Iraq (109 000)
Most people who immigrated to Sweden have lived in their home countries for over ten years and about 60 per cent of these people receive a citizenship. To get a Swedish citizenship, one has to apply for it after having lived in Sweden for five years. In 2008 immigration in Sweden was very high. About 90 201 people received residence permit or registered right of residence in Sweden. Out of these people about 11 237 were refugees (ibid).

In 2010 from January to September, according to statistics from the Swedish board of migration, Sweden received about 1642 asylum-convention refugees (25.68%), 5211 shelter-seekers (skyddsbehövande) (8.58%) and 1558 (2.58%) quota refugees (kvoftlyktingar). Out of these the majority are from Somalia, Iraq and Iran (Statistik-migrationsverket, 2010).

Since the number of refugee immigrants has increased drastically during the last five years, it has become a central concern of the Swedish authorities to integrate these people. There is a difference between the 50, 60, and 70’s work migration and today. Back then, these immigrants were needed for work purpose. The integration was not a concern, because almost all people who came as immigrants found occupations. The present situation is different- the immigrants themselves have to find their own way to get a job.

1.3 Research delimitation

Since there are about 1.5 million people in Sweden who are immigrants, the author has decided to limit the study to female immigrants. This study will mainly put focus on immigrant women, coming to Sweden as refugees. The investigation will map out their journey from the time they were granted citizenship until they gained employment. The study will also draw attention to their experiences and what they feel have facilitated, (as well as the obstacles they have faced), to become part of the Swedish society.

The investigation has been performed with the support of the SPES and the municipalities mainly in the region of Stockholm. However, the clarification to this limitation will be presented in the next section.

1.3.1 Territorial delimitation

The SPES have many offices located in almost all local regions in Sweden, in order to ensure support for immigrants to find a job. The reason why the author chose to work in collaboration with the SPES was due to two reasons. First of all the agency is able to keep records of those who have become part of the labour market and secondly because it has the responsibility, with the support of the municipality, to guide newly arrived immigrants to integrate into the Swedish society, especially those who come as refugees.
The duty of integrating immigrants is of a social concern and therefore the collaboration takes place with a number of other administrative agencies. As already mentioned the municipalities and the SPES have the main responsibility, but also, the Swedish Board of Migration, the Swedish Social Insurance Administration and the Swedish Tax Agency work in partnership. This information is vital in order to understand the broad work that takes place by these administrative authorities when it comes to integration policies in Sweden.

The author wished to spread out and interview people from different places in Sweden, in order to get a broader picture and to get in touch with people from different regions in Sweden. However, this was prevented. The interviews were instead forcibly limited to Huddinge Kommun and Norrtälje Kommun (in particular a village called Rimbo), both located in the Stockholm. The reason why it became centralized to these places was primarily due to lack of willingness of the SPES offices in different regions in Sweden (except Huddinge Kommun and Norrtälje Kommun) to help find subjects to study. This very unwillingness is the main reason why the interviews were limited to the region of Stockholm.

1.4 Research question and purpose

The purpose of the study is to map non-Swedish women’s integration journey in Sweden and the aspects that facilitates for immigrant women to integrate into the Swedish society.

To achieve these ends the thesis will be divided into three overall parts.

**Part 1** strives to map out integration issues that are handled on a national level. This part is mainly based on theoretical evidence.

**Part 2** discusses important aspects that will be discussed in relation to the interviews that have been conducted. This part will involve both the theoretical and empirical evidence in order to accomplish the goal of the investigation.

**Part 3**, which is the concluding part, discusses the outcomes of the investigation.

The overall questions of the thesis are:

- What aspects facilitate non-Swedish women’s integration in the Swedish society?
- Do administrative authorities handle integration issues in an efficient way?

The follow-up questions are:

- In what ways do administrative authorities handle integration issues?
- What can be done to improve the present situation?

1.5 Contribution of the research and its importance

The contribution of this research is to highlight the problems that immigrants face when they settle down in Sweden. But the study also hold importance as it sheds light upon the fallacies in the Swedish societal system that gives rise to segregated areas and the confusion and misunderstanding that occur between the people living in these segregated areas and people
living outside. Moreover, the investigation holds significance as it shows immigrant women’s situation in the Swedish society and the hurdles they face in becoming integrated.

The first part of the research focuses on giving some background information about immigrants in Sweden and what the Swedish government does, in general, to integrate them into the Swedish society. The study has mainly concentrated on involving women in this study, as the author has a genuine interest for women and their situation in Sweden as immigrants. Having been born in a family, whose parents came to Sweden during the 70’s, makes her curious what these women experience when they come to a new country whose culture is completely different from their own.

The research will put forward some general information about different cultures and what it is like to come to a new country. Cultural diversity and cultural differences are two important aspects in this kind of research and therefore will be touched upon later in the thesis.

Since the research question is: What aspects facilitate non-Swedish women’s integration in Swedish society?, the thesis will primarily pay attention to certain criteria that have to be fulfilled before employment. This means that the center of attention of the research is to investigate the aspects that prepare women (both mentally and physically) to join the labour market and hence to become part of the Swedish society.
2 Methodology

This chapter presents two parts, the ‘Analytical Framework’ and the ‘Method’. The distinction between these two parts is that the first explains the theories behind using such methodological approach and the second presents the actual method used to carry out the research. As mentioned previously, the aim of the study is to explore the aspects that facilitate non-Swedish women’s integration into the Swedish society and therefore this chapter will explain the approach used to reach these women and how to conduct the interviews. This chapter will also highlight the weaknesses and the obstacles faced while conducting the research.

2.1 Analytical framework

The research method used in this study is a Policy Implementation Analysis method. The purpose of this study is to increase the knowledge in how to closely examine the relation between policy and action (Johansson, 2008). In this case the aim is to analyse organisational processes from the integration policies in Sweden to what individuals (in this case immigrant women) experience and in what ways integration policies are applied, on individuals, in the Swedish society.

According to Hjern (2007) and Karlsson (2009) there are three main branches within policy analysis that are illustrated on the next page that described the process on analysing the policies.

These three models have been elaborated on by Karlsson (2009) who argues that all three models are relevant to use since they are used when actors organise themselves to cooperate and coordinate their activities. However, in this case, model number three is the most relevant since it analyses from a bottom-up perspective, whereas model two and three uses the classic top-down approach.

Model number three focuses on organising rather than organisations. According to the model, organising addresses challenges or problems that individuals face that need to be solved with a power center like a government or state. In this case the women that were part of the study conveyed their needs, which were matched with the policies that come from the governments, whether the policies fulfill their purpose or not. According to Hjern (1999) and Johansson (2008) policy organising analysis investigates the “rationality of established power in relation to contemporary problems and challenge” (Hjern, 1999 in Johansson 2008).
2.1.1 Grounded theory

The second part of the study is based on a field study, where interviews are to be carried out. One of the important aspects in conducting interviews is that they can be either empirical or theoretical. An investigation can be used to gather empirical data or, alternatively, to test the implications of a theory. The interviews are often employed in case studies, but the purpose can vary. It could be either “to develop knowledge about one specific person or institution or to use the case to illustrate more general phenomena” (Kvale, 1996, p.98).

A field study which is the qualitative nature of the study is based on a grounded theory. The theory derives from data (Solvang, 1997). According to Glaser and Strauss (1967),

“discovery of theory from data – which we call grounded theory – is a major task confronting sociology today, for as we shall try to show, such a theory fits empirical situations, and is understandable to sociologists and laymen alike. Most important it works- provides us with relevant predictions, explanations, interpretations and applications


The research has a descriptive and explanatory approach which relies on the women’s experience about their situation and gives the researcher a ground to base the theory on. The field study provides a platform for building theories as the researcher is able to communicate and form a dialogue with the participants. The participants then grant the researcher relevant areas of concern and ideas that the final discussion and conclusions can rely on. This research uses a bottom-up approach in order to accomplish the goal. In this study the use of the interviews (the empirical evidence) are used as background to find areas of concern that the investigation will be built upon.
2.1.2 ‘Bottom-up’ vs. ‘Top-Down’

The ‘bottom-up’-strategy is important and very useful as it helps the researcher to gather data that derives from primary sources (in this case the interviews). The ‘bottom-up’ strategy is in contrast to the ‘top-down’ strategy, which presumes certain areas of concern before drawing the conclusion.

For instance in this case, if the author would have implemented a ‘top-down’ approach the important aspects that facilitate immigrant women to be integrated would have been chosen beforehand. For instance, aspects such as communicative skills, language, discrimination, good health and responsibility, to name a few give women a feeling of belongingness, which is why it is a necessity that these aspects are accomplished in order for women to become part of the Swedish society. But this is not the case in this investigation. Here the author does not want to have any clue or information about the respondent’s situation before the interviews have been carried out.

Instead the ‘bottom-up’- strategy is the most suitable method due to two reasons. First of all, it helps identifying societal issue through the women’s experiences and secondly it lays the foundation to detect a pattern and a structure to follow through persons or organisations, whose information we have been given by the interviewed (Nilsson, 2007).

As Hjern and Andersson (1998) argues “this methodological approach is capable of discovering and distinguishes contingent webs of supportive persons and organisations for the problem under investigation” (Tanghöj, 2007, p.17). Moreover, this approach does not only give an insight of the struggle of these women to find a job, but it reflects many other immigrant women’s situation in Sweden.

Nonetheless, the thesis does not only make use of the ‘bottom-up’ strategy. The use of ‘top-down’ and ‘bottom-up’ has been combined. In the first part of the thesis where the general problem are discussed, concepts such as integration and theories are clarified. This is due to the avoidance of confusion later in the thesis. This final discussion part will evaluate the concept of integration from two approaches- the theoretical and the empirical.

2.1.3 Explanatory or descriptive theory (inductive and deductive approach)

The deductive and inductive approaches resemble the previous idea about ‘top-down’ and ‘bottom-up’. Deductive reasoning works from the more general to the more specific, whereas the inductive approach, works the opposite, from specific observations to a more general pattern and then reaching up to a theory. The inductive approach is more open-ended and explanatory. Both approaches are different, but hold equal importance. The deductive approach on the other hand begins with choosing a theory that needs to be tested. Hypotheses are tested until it is narrowed down even further where observations are collected to address the hypotheses. This ultimately leads to a confirmation or rejection of an already existing theory (Kvale, 1996).

As mentioned earlier this study is a combination of both approaches. The deductive nature will be used when investigating the integration policies in Sweden and then test with the use of interviews whether they hold true or not. The inductive part is conducted through the field study, where the experiences told by the women will be considered in explanatory and evaluating process and reach up to a theory. This part will contribute to the empirical part of the research where primary sources will be used (Nilsson, 2007).
2.1.4 Qualitative methodology

The main method used in this study is of a qualitative nature. Qualitative studies are usually conducted through interviews, narrative dialogues, interactions, observations, and protocol analysis (Svenning, 2003). In contrast to the qualitative study is the quantitative study. The difference between the two methods is that qualitative studies are carried out in depth and uses open-ended questions when conducting interviews. For instance one can form dialogues and get a deeper knowledge about a phenomenon. The quantitative nature generalizes an issue and uses closed questions. Kvale’s notion on qualitative research is that it “is sensitive to the human situation, it involves an emphatic dialogue with the subjects studied and it might contribute to their emancipation and empowerment. The qualitative interview is a uniquely sensitive and powerful method for capturing the experience of the subject’s everyday world. Interviews allow the subjects to convey to others their situation from their own perspectives and in their own words” (1996, p. 70).

The reason behind using qualitative field study is to stay connected to the empirical world. A specific procedure of this study will be outlined in the next section.

2.2 Method of the research conducted

2.2.1 Literature review for background

The first part of the thesis is based on descriptive and theoretical information, which is the point of departure. Most of the sources chosen were found using the internet to review the integration policies in Sweden. Much of the information was looked up on both local and national level home pages; this could range from local municipality pages to foreign department documents.

Moreover, in order to find qualitative sources, previous journals and articles and literatures were found. These articles and journals were found via library databases and the literature used was located through the library. The key words, which hold key hits were, women, immigrants, integration, asylum, newly arrived immigrants, foreigners, integration policy and refugees- all the words were in the context of Sweden. From this process, relevant sources such as administrative authorities were found who happen to have information concerning integration policies in Sweden and those who work with newly arrived immigrants coming to Sweden. From here the “For Whom Group” was identified.

2.2.2 Identifying the ‘For Whom’- group

The process started by looking up statistics on the internet to find where most immigrants that came to Sweden as refugees were received by the municipalities. Research had been done in advance about the work of SPES relating to newly arrived immigrants in Sweden.

Two criteria’s had been fixed in advance. Firstly, the women had to be refugees and secondly that they needed to have been in the labour market at some point in their life. These criteria’s were necessary to keep constant in order to get information about their experiences, which was the point of departure in the investigation.
The reason why immigrant women were chosen as subjects, rather than officials working with integration policies, was due to two reasons. First of all, the result would be biased if officials working in the agencies were interviewed and secondly because the author was determined to interview the people onto whom the integration policies are applied. It is of enormous significance to consider who are interviewed in this kind of investigation, since it can have a huge impact on the conclusions of the thesis.

2.2.3 Methodological Scheme for Constructing and Organising Interviews

The questions in the interviews where organised according to the model below (fig 2), where the questions and answers were categorized into F0, F1, F2 and so on. This was done in order to identify the actors and organisations that affected the lives of the women, which were identified through the approach presented below. By using this method, the study’s reliability and credibility has not only been strengthened, but also its accuracy and objectivity. This gives room for discussions in the interviews and at the same time link the information received with theoretical data.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>F0</th>
<th>F1</th>
<th>F2</th>
<th>F3</th>
<th>F4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To understand the organisation and its responsibilities. The reason why the research should be conducted.</td>
<td>For who or what?</td>
<td>What are the main aspects?</td>
<td>What are the resources used?</td>
<td>What are the results?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Outcome: Actors identified

Outcome: With who?

Outcome: With who?

Outcome: With who?

Outcome: With who?

Figure 2. Methodological Scheme.


2.3 Obstacles to carry out the research

One of the obstacles faced was the bureaucratic structures within the SPES. Most counselors that were contacted referred to their chiefs for further information and guidance. Some were openly unwilling to support the investigation unless orders were given by their bosses. Therefore, request letters were sent out to the chiefs of a number of SPES offices all over Sweden, where the project was explained and request was made to reach the women1. Some replied whereas most did not. The few ones that did in fact reply contacted the author either via

1See appendix
phone or email. Most of them gave negative notifications. Their suggestion, to great extent was the same. Their recommendation was that the author should contact departments within the municipalities that work with integration and immigration issues. Their main argument for this was that the resources were restricted and the employees were unable to assist due to lack of time and directives given by higher authorities.

2.4 Difficulties to identify each actor’s responsibility

The dilemma in this research was to identify specifically what duties each actor carries, particularly in terms of the authorities, agencies, personnel and counselors. The trickiest part in the investigation has been to figure out the distribution of precise working-tasks that the municipalities and the SPES hold regarding immigrant-related issues. Since there is about to be a shift of responsibilities from the municipalities to the SPES, the situation becomes even more diffuse. The author found this difficult to cope with, which runs the chance of affecting the outcome of the thesis, despite efforts taken to prevent such a development.

2.5 Making contact with the interviewed and conducting the interviews

Information about the women was given to the author through the counselors of the SPES and the municipality in the form of cell phone number, address and background information about their present occupation. The author reached the subjects through their cell phone numbers. When the female subjects answered, they had received comprehensive information about the study, but the author decided to explain the study more in detail during the meeting. Time and date was decided and all women came to meet the author at their respective railway and bus stations. The interviews took place in different environments.

The author decided to give the respondents the freedom to decide where they wished to be for the interview. This was done in order to make the environment as comfortable as possible for the subjects, where they felt relaxed and stress-free. Two of the interviews were conducted at their respective homes, one took place in a public park, one at one of the respondents’ office and the last one in a bar (during day-time). The interviews were conducted by forming a dialogue with the respondents.

The author took notes during the interview and the length of the interviews varied from about 45 minutes up till two hours. The questions were not sent out in advance, since the questions were open-ended where it was room for follow-up questions. The aim of the interviews was to engage into an open conversation with the respondents, and not restricting them to give direct and limited answers to the questions that were asked. The only equipments that were used was a note-pad and an ink-pen.

The notes that have been taken are presented in form of quotations in the thesis. The quotations are the primary data that has been gathered with the use of the bottom-up approach through the interviews that have been conducted. The quotations will be presented in part 2 of the thesis.
Part 1

Part 1 of the thesis presents the theoretical framework. This part will underline the importance and duties of the Swedish Public Employment Service (the agency) and in what ways it handles and applies the integration policies in Sweden. This part will also draw attention to concepts such as: ‘Assimilation’, ‘Integration’ and ‘Segregation’, which are of importance in order to contrast the theoretical part (part 1) relative to the empirical part (part 2). The concepts are important to be familiar with in order to comprehend the rest of the thesis.
3 The Swedish Public Employment Service

As the Swedish Public Employment Service (SPES) has played a vital role in the thesis and served as a platform to reach the respondents, a presentation of its organisational model will be presented in the following section as well as how it handles the integrating process in Sweden.

3.1 Organisation model

For further clarification and a visualization of the model, please refer to model 1.1 in the appendix.

The SPES is a public authority present in almost all over Sweden, large as well as small cities. They have about 325 Public Employment Service local offices, which are subdivided into 69 geographic labour market areas (SPES organisation, 2010). The General Director and the management board are located in their headquarters in Stockholm. The whole organisation is lead by the board that is selected by the government of Sweden. The board is the main decision maker of the organisation that takes the overall decisions. Linked to the board is the Internal Audit, which has the responsibility to report missions that are given by the board.

The General Director works under the board and is guided by the deputy general director, which is linked to the international affairs. The General Director is in charge of three main areas of concern that report to the General Director: Press, Planning and Development. The Planning staff has the main responsibility of planning and organising the whole process of the organisation. The Development staff handles related development issues of the organisation and the press staff has the duty of dealing with the mass media. Additionally, the General Director’s office which is under the General Director, specializes in handling critical question of the organisation. The General Director’s Office has two additional branches linked to it: the Controlling and the Security (SPES organisering, 2010).

3.1.1 Operative department

The SPES is divided into market areas. Besides the ten market areas that in turn are divided into the labour market areas, there is a unit that specializes in customer support through call centers.

3.1.2 Departments

The SPES has a number of departments that have the main responsibility of supporting the operative centers. All these sections report to the General Director. The departments are:

- Analysis
- Rehabilitation to Work
- Integration and Introduction
- Employment Service Strategy
- Private Providers
- Market and Relations
- Finance
- Information
3.2 What is their service?

The SPES is a public organisation that works between the employee and the jobseeker. Employers have contact with a counselor who offers support in various recruitment matters. The job coaches or counselors (handläggare) work with the jobseekers and provide them with services that assist them in their search to find a job. The support entails everything from recruitment meetings to advice on how to write a CV and suggestions of where to find a job. This is dependent on the background of the jobseeker and his/her qualifications. The SPES offers extra support to jobseekers, who due to functional disability or other difficulties or disabilities are unable to find a job. They also offer labour market programmes that are designed to help these people.

3.3 Two new assignments

The SPES has been given two new assignments by the government in 2010. These projects aim to support those who have a weaker and disadvantaged position in the labor market. The aim is to endow them so that they can support themselves. One of the assignments is to support those who due to their expiring sickness benefit are not capable to go back to their previous employer and are unable to work due to their bad health. For these people the SPES is going to provide individual support by renewing their possibility to find a job that suits them.

The second new task of the SPES, which is related to this research, is to support newly arrived immigrant to join the labour market from December 1 2010. Their main goal is to ensure that these immigrants as quickly as possible learn Swedish and find a job in order to financially become independent (An Introduction to Arbetsförmedlingen, 2010).

3.4 The introduction and the integration department

The Government of Sweden proposed a reform to speed up the introduction to newly arrived immigrants to working and social life through a new reform ‘Labour Market responsibility of newly arrived – immigrants individual Responsibility with Professional Service’ (Government reform to Speed up the introduction of new arrivals, 2009). The aim of the project is that these immigrants as quickly as possible are fully able to support themselves. The proposal of the government underlines that

“more rapid introduction will be accomplished by strengthening incentives to find a job to participate in introduction activities. A clearer and more distinct division of responsibilities between various actors will create an efficient introduction chain”

(Government reform to Speed up the introduction of new arrivals, p.1, 2009).
4 The transformation of responsibilities (from the municipality to the SPES)

From December 1 2010 the municipalities in the whole of Sweden will transfer most of their immigrant-related services to the SPES. The directives are given by the Swedish government. This section will be dedicated to present the changes in detail and also highlight the current integration policies in Sweden.

The foremost reason behind granting the SPES the responsibility of newly arrivals is due to the unnecessarily long time that it takes for immigrants to become part of the labour market. From the time that an immigrant receives residence permit up until they have entered the labour market takes on average about seven years (Fernandez, 2010), which is an unreasonably long time. In addition, the situation is different for men and women today. About 15% of the newly arrived men have a job after one year, correspondingly for women it takes about five years to get a job. These figures show that remedies are necessary in order to solve the structural problems in the current system (Government reform to Speed up the introduction of new arrivals, 2009).

4.1 An experiment: to implement the new proposal

Before the new reform enter into force in 2010, the SPES has implemented a pilot project in 29 municipalities around Sweden. When the establishment reform takes effect, the responsibility of the SPES will be extended. All its offices in the country will offer establishment plans for the newly arrived immigrants. This would mean that the SPES will be responsible for Swedish for Immigrants (SFI), Civic Orientation and Work Preparation Activities. However, the delivery of the SFI and civic orientation will be the responsibility of the municipalities. As soon as the immigrant has been granted residence permit, the counselors of the SPES is responsible to introduce their project to the newly arrived (Poles, 2010). The project focuses on arranging meetings on regular basis and the work will be in progress up to three months after the residence permit has been granted.

The pilot scheme run by the SPES is steered by a national committee, a national project leader and a local working team administrated by a head at the local agencies (Lagen om etablerings sinsatser—försöksverksamheten jämfört med reformen, 2010).

4.2 The new reform in detail

Those who take part in the introduction period are paid benefits for actively participating in the introduction measures. Immigrants are also encouraged to work alongside the introduction period. The main purpose of the programme is to prepare the immigrants for a job and give them the opportunity to explore their own qualities.

As previously discussed in the thesis, the SPES will coordinate the introduction activities for new arrivals, instead of the municipalities after December 1, 2010 (Government reform the speed up the introduction of new arrivals in Sweden, 2009). A new benefit is that will be the same for everyone in the process regardless where the immigrants decide to live. Yet, one of the presumptions is that they actively participate in introduction activities, with the help of a ‘introduction guide’ that will be introduced to them after they have been granted residence permit. The aim is that the immigrants take part in civic orientation, quickly learn Swedish and join the labour market in order to become financially independent. These introduction
benefits are designed so that they encourage new arrivals to combine taking part in introduction activities and to work. This will eventually improve their prospects of finding a job quicker.

Moreover, the introduction benefits are designed to encourage gender equality, which means that these benefits are individually based and hence are not affected by the household income. This will encourage both men and women to actively participate and join the labour market on equal terms. The benefit will be provided by the central government and the SPES will take the decision of who will be given the benefits. This means that the role of the municipalities after December 1, 2010 will diminish. This will eventually lead to that they will neither pay introduction benefits to new arrivals nor social allowance any longer.

Furthermore the SPES, will also hold the responsibility of encouraging the newly arrivals to move where the jobs are. This will be done since the SPES will take over the responsibility of assisting immigrants in finding a place of residence and matching the skills of the newly arrived with a suitable municipality that will give them brighter opportunities to find work. The period of offering support in finding a place to live will be extended from one month to six months.

As mentioned earlier, immediately after given residence permit, the SPES has the responsibility to conduct interviews with each individual to map out their background. After the interview, an ‘individual introduction plan’ is to be drawn up with the support of a counselor who works for the SPES. This plan is based on previous work experience and educational background and takes into consideration what each individual want to do and what they wish to work with in their future. In the plan some activities are mandatory which include SFI, civic orientation and employment preparation activities. The length of the plan is individually based, yet it cannot exceed more than 25 months.

Immigrants in Sweden come from various countries and bring their own values, which make them unfamiliar with the Swedish ones. Therefore, civic orientation is an important part of the introductory plan. Here the new arrivals receive information on fundamental concepts such as democracy and equal rights. They are also provided with knowledge about what and how it is to live in the Swedish society, where emphasis is put on gender equality and the respect for the integrity of youngsters. They are also enlightened about the rights and obligations of each individual in society (Government reform the speed up the introduction of new arrivals in Sweden, 2009).
5 Important concepts

This chapter will present and clarify some important concepts that are used in the thesis. The concepts are: Assimilation, Integration and Segregation. This is done in order to provide a general understanding for the reader to realize the problems that rise and also serving as a platform to understand the rest of the study.

5.1 Assimilation

In a more general context the meaning of assimilation means that

“immigrants were to be incorporated into society through a one-sided process of adaption. They were to give up their distinctive, linguistic, cultural or social characteristics and become indistinguishable from the majority population”

(Castles and Miller, 2009, p.244).

According to Westin’s (1999) definition, assimilation means to integrate new material to be converted into an “environment” and ultimately become part of a system/whole. Often, assimilation is defined in terms of a melting-pot, where immigrants from diverse communities and cultures blend into the host society.

Assimilation has long been seen as an end result of an adjustment process. In the long run, history has revealed that some immigrants eventually lose, or give up, their cultural values, but the awareness of the origin survives in each individual and remains to be present for several generations. An example is the Swedes in the US. It takes a long time before the immigrant group ceases to exist as an identifiable group or minority. However, there have also been cases where countries are taken over by dominating groups, like the US and Canada.

A sign that the minority group has completely assimilated is when exogamy takes place on a large scale in the host country. Exogamy means that marriage takes place outside a person’s own cultural group. Yet, this does not indicate that this phenomenon is applied to all minority groups, who are part of a host society. Some groups tend to maintain their cultural identity for many generations. In some cases this could also have a paradoxical effect, where it can lead to segregation, where groups instead prefer to stay outside the mainstream society. These minorities often desire endogamy, which means that a person marries within their own societal and cultural group.

Within social psychology, assimilation is often referred to the

“willingness of people coming from a minority group (ethnic, cultural or linguistic) to operate within the majority community’s economic and labour sector, and this, combined with an openness to acquire the host society’s lifestyle and attitudes”

(Westin, 1999,p.49).

Assimilation is based on peoples own choice. Immigrants decide themselves whether they wish to embrace the new cultural values or not. In Sweden it was believed that it is up to the immigrants themselves to assimilate in order to be part of the Swedish society. However, in 1975 the Swedish parliament announced to change the assimilation policy to integration
policy. Integration that will be presented in the next section is what takes place in a multicultural society. Immigrants are according to Westin (1999, p.49)

“free to develop their identification and sense of belonging with the majority or minority. Individuals may choose to assimilate or maintain their cultural (minority) identity”.

5.2 Integration

In today’s globalised era, many countries have a growing immigrant population. This is due to conscious labour recruitment, the formation of immigrant policies and/or due to bilateral agreements between countries in sending and receiving immigrants. In some cases policies of large-scale immigration also exist. Generally in these cases, there are quota policies, determined politically, that states act in accordance with (Castles and Miller, 2009).

Once immigrants have arrived in a country the question rises

“how immigrants and their descendants can become part of receiving societies and nations rights and how state and civil society can and should facilitate this process?”

(Castles, et. al. p.245).

One term that is generally referred to in this case is ‘integration’, which according to Westin (1999) is a complex and a problematic concept. According to him there are three different explanations to this term that are partly connected with each other and that are applied to society as a whole, as well as, groups and individuals. The following section will therefore explain the three cases.

5.2.1 Three explanations to integration

Explanation 1: The whole and its parts

In its most general sense, the concept of integration refers to the relationship between the whole and its parts. Integration is said to occur when parts are in harmony with the whole. Within sociology, it is about the consistency of the relationship between parts and the whole, which according to Westin (1999) is referred to the community cohesion. The meaning of the word society can be associated with the idea of ‘holding together’ and the concepts of ‘cohesive’ and ‘cohesion’. But like any other system, even this system has defectiveness and flaws.

Integration in terms of cohesion has been studied as a phenomenon that concerns society as a whole, but also in several parts like groups, institutions and organisations. In a more general form, the concept of integration has been used in relation to EU’s efforts to harmonize the policies, laws and economy of the member states with each other in the spirit of the Maastricht agreement. The issue of European integration is about to weld Europe into an economic, political and supranational whole, yet, by maintaining the linguistic, national and cultural characteristics of its member states.

There are two essential explanations to why societies hold together. In some communities cohesion is built as the members in a society essentially form their lives after the common values, norms and beliefs in the society. Cohesion is the result of unification. Traditionally, the Church has been the principal conduit of values and beliefs about the meaning of life and
therefore an instrument of cohesion. In our time, the school system, working life and the media are the main intermediaries of values, norms and beliefs. According to Emile Dukheim this is the kind of cohesion that is called mechanical solidarity. He explains the term as

“a state of a community bonding or interdependency which rests on a similarity of beliefs and values, shared activities, and ties of kinship and cooperation”

(Chopra, 2005, p. 208).

The mechanical solidarity characterizes the predominantly agrarian and pre-industrial societies.

The second main explanation for why societies hold together is the division of labour and specialization. The division of labour does indeed lead to occupational differentiation, but the result of the member states efforts lead to integration. According to Emile Durkheim organic solidarity is

“a state of interdependency created by the specialization of roles and which individuals and institutions become acutely dependent on others in a complex division of labour”


In this sense, integration characterizes a social system (the whole) not individuals or groups (parts). This means that societies can be integrated, not individuals.

**Explanation 2: Participation**

For many years, the concept of integration has primarily been associated with the issue of participation in a community for cultural and ethnic minorities, especially foreign-born and their children. In the Swedish history, the concept of assimilation was challenged during the 1960s (Westin, 1999).

In most classical immigrant countries (like France, the USA and Canada), non-westerners who lived in these countries were treated unfairly and “tended to have disadvantaged work-situations and to become concentrated in specific neighborhoods” (Castles. et al,2009, p. 247).

People started to realize that assimilation appeared to be an unrealistic goal. At this point of time, immigrant minority groups demanded that their cultural identity should be recognized by the mainstream society. One concrete action was to have the right of running own schools. During such circumstances integration was seen as an alternative to traditional assimilation. This was an opportunity for ethnic minority groups to maintain their cultural identity while “integrating into mainstream society, economy, production, resource allocation, policy and governance” (Westin, 1999, p.55). One term that is used in this context is *participation*. In order for cultural, ethnic and linguistic minorities’ to integrate into the mainstream society, it may be defined as participation in the society’s public sphere, without having to change the private (cultural) sphere. Important aspects within the society’s participation sphere are the labour market, the school system, the voluntary sector, club activities and the political system.
“Participation is thus an important condition for integration. One reason why integration is not achieved, may be that the majority society prevents minorities from participating in society on an equal footing.”

(Westin, 1999, p.56).

**Explanation 3: Marriage**

The concept of integration is also described as the process by which ethnic and cultural minorities are integrated into society. The famous sociologist Milton Gordon formulated a model of progressive participation across different areas of participation in society, from economy and work to marriage across ethnic and cultural boundaries. According to him, when the last step of marriage across ethical and cultural boundaries is taken, assimilation is completed. In this case, integration is seen as a step towards assimilation. Furthermore, some areas are more important than others when it comes to economic, cultural and linguistic minorities’ integration.

Economic integration means that the minority population is incorporated into the mainstream society, where they have access to the majority society’s regular distribution, for example by being an employee or to run your own business where you pay tax. Economic integration also means that minority groups have access, on equal basis with others, to the labour market and enjoy the same conditions as others when it comes to governmental transfers. Groups that primarily support themselves within an informal economy, or through activities that are outside regulatory control, cannot be said to be economically integrated into society. For economic-integration to be well-functioning, it is a requirement that discrimination on ethical, cultural and linguistic grounds do not exist in a society.

Social integration is primarily for people to meet across cultural, ethnic and linguistic boundaries in common non-inflicted informal get-togethers during spare time, in voluntary work, in education and work. An effective social integration requires that people are not excluded from informal social network due to xenophobia and prejudice.

Political integration presumes that ethnic, cultural and linguistic minorities use their opportunities as other members of the society to influence political decisions by voting in general elections. Foreign nationals who have citizenship in Sweden have right to vote in the municipal and regional elections, but not in parliamentary elections. This means that Swedish citizenship is not a prerequisite for political integration (Westin, 1999).

**5.3 Segregation**

The prerequisites of maintaining an integration model in a country is when different societal groups are integrated. Yet, when this is not the case, the question of segregation arises. The concept of segregation means, in general, the separation of a certain group from the whole, which means that some parts of the society are disconnected with each other. However, this does not indicate that the groups themselves have a weak bonding, as they form their own groupings without merging with other parts of the society. Nevertheless this does not mean that integration is non-existent. In fact, in a segregated society groups integrate underneath the ‘surface’, which indicates that groups create their own strong cultural, linguistic and class-based societies (Westin, 1999). Therefore, it cannot be claimed that integration does not have any relation to segregation. As a matter of fact, integration is present in a segregated society, but on a lower level.
Segregation can therefore leave its mark on many parts of the society, where people meet. For example, the labour market, the school, involvement in voluntary activities, the health system, the career, the housing market and many more aspects in society that affect individuals in a society. The most common aspect, though, in reality is the housing segregation issues that play an important role to separate people from integrating with each other.

Housing segregation means that different groups are systematically separated in terms of areas, where they have a house, an occupation and a school to go to. These factors create ‘disassociation’ between groups in terms of age, housing-type and the identification of belonging to a certain societal grouping class and an ethical society. Housing segregation has its biggest effect on the isolation of societal-classes and ethical groups. In a segregated society, this creates lack of communication and association between these groups. In this case, the segregation creates physical distance between the groups, which is difficult to break (ibid).

The concept of segregation is often associated with housing segregation, which is problematic in Sweden when it comes to bigger cities, in particular the Stockholm region. Access to available apartments is the biggest issue that steers where people are located. For some people it is important to live among their own social groups, for others, it has to do with the systems in Sweden that locate immigrants in the same areas. Above these factors, the discrimination aspect also creates additional hindrances for immigrants to choose their own housing areas (Rauhut et.al, 2003).

This and much more will be presented in chapter 11 that will discuss the housing segregation aspect in Sweden.
Part 2

Part 2 of the thesis will present the difficulties as well as the aspects that have facilitated immigrant women’s integration into the Swedish society. The information is based on a combination of the interviews conducted (empirical evidence) and supportive sources. This section will be subdivided into six chapters: (7) ‘Cultural Differences’, (8) ‘Gender Roles’, (9) ‘Discrimination’, (10) ‘The Importance of the Swedish Language’, (11) ‘Residential Segregation’ and (12) ‘The Role of the Administrative Authorities’. These aspects have been detected through the interviews.

Each aspect will have its own headline, under which the information will be presented. In addition, all the aspects will be supported by quotations (narrated by the respondents), which will underline the significance of the aspects chosen. Yet, it is of importance to keep in mind that a shorter version of all the quotations will be presented in this part. However, to access the full quotations, both in English and Swedish, kindly take a look at the appendix, presented at the end of the thesis.
6 Short information about the respondents

Due to confidentiality the women that were interviewed will not be presented by name. Instead all women are recognized as ‘respondents’ throughout the thesis. This section will give some short information about their daily life and occupation.

Respondent 1:

She lives in a suburb outside Stockholm (in Flemingsberg) with her family that consists of her husband and three children. She has been living in Sweden for the past 2 years and 8 months. She works as a cook and janitor and she has been working for about one week. With the support of the SPES and the municipality of Huddinge she was provided with trainee jobs, SFI and SAS education. She works during the week days and takes SAS\textsuperscript{2} B evening courses three times a week.

Respondent 2:

She lives in a small place named Rimbo, which is located within the Stockholm region. She lives there with a husband who works in Uppsala and a son who is in kindergarten. In her home country she received a PhD. Due to war and belligerent circumstances she had to flee with her family. She got a temporary job as a lecturer at a Swedish university, which she found independently after 3 months of stay in Sweden. She completed SFI within 6 months and she continued to study SAS A and is about to complete SAS B in the near future.

Respondent 3:

When she came to Sweden about six years ago, she used to live in a suburb in Örebro\textsuperscript{3}. She was pregnant at that time. She and her husband did not live together at that time, due to financial shortage. He used to work in Stockholm as a dish washer. In the beginning she faced a lot of troubles. She was deeply in chock when she came to Sweden because she had problems to adjust to the new environment. After a few months she and her husband shifted to Stockholm, in the hope of new opportunities. With the support of the municipality of Huddinge, she started a vocational education SFF (a course that combines studies in the Swedish language and entrepreneurship preparatory skills). After having completed SFI and SFF she started her own business in Lidingö\textsuperscript{4}, however her residence is located in Flemingsberg.

Respondent 4:

She came to Sweden three years ago and is thirty two years of age. After having finished SFI, she started a child-care course, which she was advised to take by a counselor at the SPES. She has experience in this occupation from her home country, where she used to work as a teacher. After three months she got a trainee offer from the SPES at a nursery, and after another 3 months she got a temporary job at the same nursery, where she works even today. She studies SAS during the evenings and works during the days. She lives in Flemingsberg with her family that consists of her husband and her two children.

\textsuperscript{2} Compulsory Swedish education provided in elementary school for pupils who speak a mother language other than Swedish.

\textsuperscript{3} A town in Sweden.

\textsuperscript{4} It is an island in part of the inner Stockholm archipelago.
Respondent 5:

This woman came to Sweden eight years ago. Without the support of the SPES or the municipality, she found a job at a sandwich factory, where she worked for six years. She came to Sweden with her two children. In her home country, she studied one year at university, but had to quit after her marriage. She received assistance from the municipality in Huddinge to find an apartment in the beginning of her stay in Sweden. At the same time she was advised by a counselor at the municipality to join SFI. After merely three months she started to work, and therefore had to quit her studies. At the present, she works as a temporary employee at an old people’s house and is planning to start a vocational course and to continue and finish her remaining studies in SFI and SAS.
Important Aspects

This section will present the aspects (in the form of chapters) that have been identified through the conducted interviews. Quotations will be presented in each chapter, narrated by the women along with supportive secondary sources, to reinforce the essence of each aspect. Throughout this section, a number of quotations will be presented, however to see the full quotations and the Swedish version of the quotations please see the appendix.

7 Cultural differences

"It was beautiful. Beautiful scenery and good weather. I arrived in October. I was shocked to see that people follow the laws here, which is very good. There is a big difference in culture. For example, the Swedes can talk about sex. There is nothing I am used to. People also kiss on the streets. After a while one gets used to that"

(Q 7:1, Respondent 2).

“"I was surprised that people are so cold. Life was very different here”

(Q 7:2, Respondent 3).

"Everything was difficult at first. New language and a new culture. I've been through war, and hope for a better life here. The people and the religion is different. But you must realize that there is a difference in order to blend in”

(Q 7:3, Respondent 4).

“"It was very lonely. The language was tough. But now I like Sweden”.

(Q 7:4, Respondent 5).

These statements express some of the feelings the women experienced in Sweden. What is interesting in all quotations is that it implicates that all women sensed a cultural distinction, which is interesting and what this chapter will discuss”.

There are three important components that are considered when it comes to globalization; culture, identity and community. These aspects often serve as a platform that forms centralized and homogenizing groups. They are often associated with new ethnic minorities. In many cases cultural differences play a significant role to form ethnic boundaries and community formation (Castles et. al, 2009). Castles et.al (2009) argues that “when ethnic groups cluster together, they establish their own neighborhoods’, marked by distinctive use of private and public spaces” (p. 40). In many countries this has caused fear to the host country that these communities will take over their country. According to him “ethnic communities symbolize a threat to the dominant culture and national identity” (p.40). In many cases this can lead to that people of the majority group believe that those who are unable to assimilate are to be blamed themselves for their marginalization.

The ethnic groups, on the other hand, believe that their culture is a source to preserve their own identity, which in many cases leads to exclusion and discrimination. The maintenance of their cultural identity is seen as a way to boost the self-esteem, which can result in a situation where “capabilities and experiences can be undermined” (p.40). In Sweden today, there are
many suburbs that have a proportionally large immigrant population, which is, possibly, a consequence of the attitudes described (ibid).

Sweden became considered a multicultural society in the 60s up until the 70s, where people got the rights to maintain their cultural values. The model was believed to be part of the assimilation model that existed in Sweden at that point of time. The rights that came with the multicultural model involved support to form cultural organisations, the formation of religious communities, provide support to cultural activities and to support mother tongue education in elementary schools. According to Peterson and Hjerm (2007), these types of actions are part of the multicultural model that serves as a platform to explore people’s political rights that exist in Sweden.

Throughout history, societies have developed and changed due to political, social and physical environmental reasons. Immigrants that come to a new country, no doubt, bring their own culture to the new society. In most cases, immigrants adapt the new culture, but the question is why “immigrants do not simply change their ways and integrate fully into the culture of their new country?” (Ockert-Axelsson and Norman, 1993, p. 34). The answer, according to Ockert-Axelsson et.al (1993) is that an adult person who immigrates to a new country has already developed a sense of identity, which cannot be changed or given up. Immigrants do not easily abandon cultural values that they have been brought up with. In most cases, the result of immigrating to a new country is a combination of the old and the new values.

According to Ockert-Axelsson et al., (1993) the meeting that takes place between the immigrant and the citizens of the host country is not always positive in the beginning. This has in many cases lead to political conflicts. But the truth is that cultural exchange should not always be associated to something negative, because cultural exchange is necessary for cultural development and the survival of society. A similar phenomenon is the human organism, which is also in need of change and development for survival.

Modifications are often painful and difficult to undergo, but the reality is that these changes must take place both for the survival of the individual and the society. People tend to develop fear and insecurity by knowing that these changes of development can lead to faded out or died cultures. Some examples of such cultures are the “Ancient Greece, Imperial Romes and Royalist China” (Ockert-Axelsson et al, 1993, p. 35). Similarly Coleen et al. (2001) argues that people landing up in a new environment feel “confused, anxiety, disoriented, suspicious, bewilderment, perplexity and an intense desire to be elsewhere” (p.270).

Many scholars argue that the more one engages to learn and understand a distinct culture, the easier it gets to understand why and how people, belonging to a different culture, react in a certain way during a certain situation. One of the most common methods to learn about the values of a new culture is to have direct-contact with a person who belongs to the culture. Therefore, it is important for an immigrant to have contact with people from the host society. By doing so, the new-comer is given the chance to form their own perception of the culture by learning the rules and what to expect in a certain situation. To make it even easier, it is important to provide good support to those who come to a new country. There is a stage of confusion, suspicion, resistance and fear until the stage is reached where a person starts to digest and appreciate the new values and to develop respect that can eventually lead up to enjoyment (ibid).
7.1 What happens when two cultures clash?

Cultures develop at their own pace and change in response to people’s needs. But one thing is clear, no culture is neither inferior nor prior to another culture. Each culture is unique and appropriate at its own place. But the question is what happens when people from two different cultures meet?

Interaction is increasing day by day by the advanced technology that we have. Therefore, societies consider opening up in order to exchange ideas, knowledge and resources. Sweden is considered to be an ethno relative state, believing in acceptance, adaption and integration.

A new comer that come as an immigrant to an unknown country, who start their journey by feeling isolated, also sense a state of denial. Yet, it is a necessity that people are able to experience differences. Although this might be difficult, it is essential to go through the stage of isolation and confusion in order to understand values and norms of the majority culture.

There are three types of situations that can arise after this stage. One effect of this can be that people either accept or deny differences. These people go from denial to defense and often form prejudices. Another consequence is that people react in the opposite way. They come to a new country and become so impressed by the new culture that they start rejecting their own culture (Ockert-Axelsson et.al, 1993). The third situation is that people combine both cultures. When a person acknowledge the differences and do not become “extremely threatened by it” (ibid, p.44), one can still succeed in maintaining their own cultural values. One way to do so is by minimizing the differences that they perceive. This means that each person needs to develop the trust that all people are equal, but that they have different cultural values. Nevertheless, the way people express this behavior can, sometimes, be interpreted differently. For example, if an immigrant is invited for dinner at somebody’s house he might be offered to have a drink. The foreigner might feel uncomfortable by this behavior, while the host does this out of politeness. This happens due to the fact that interpersonal interactions include both verbal and non-verbal communication that varies across culture. In some cases, this inappropriate behavior can result in misunderstandings and an effect can be that people develop an offensive behavior (Coleen.et al, 2001).

Ockert-Axelsson et. al (1993) summarizes cultural clashes in the following way

“Denial, defense and minimization account for great many misunderstandings and culture clashes. Without awareness, openness and acknowledgement of the significance of difference, problems that spring from interaction between different peoples cannot be solved. Not until we can understand to the point of being able to explain another person’s point of view to their satisfaction, do we have any hope of working out a way to live together that gives us all room to be ourselves”

(ibid, p.44).

Coleen. et al (2001) argues correspondingly that in order to become part and to feel comfortable in the new culture, it is necessary to acquire basic social skills about the host culture. This can be done for example by gathering knowledge about the host country in the field of history, philosophy and sociopolitical development and learn through behavioral culture training and mentoring. However, those who already are depressed isolated or feel anxiety naturally find it difficult to develop culture-friendly skills.
8 Gender roles

Öberg (1997) highlights the difficulty in judging what roles women and men play in a society. To talk about what rights, responsibility, duties, and work responsibilities men and women have, is a very delicate and complicated issue to handle.

To describe how a woman and a man “should” behave, is confusing. Therefore, it is important to understand how rights and responsibilities should be distributed in terms of the judicial framework and in the daily activities.

Often when dealing with male and female roles in society, three aspects are in conflict with each other. First of all, society’s ideal image of men and women, secondly the jurisprudence of a country that include the rights and responsibilities of men and women and thirdly, the daily life that reflects men and women’s responsibilities and their activities. The ideal image of the man and the woman is created by the heads of the society and the religion, who are mainly men. A spillover effect of this has become that men are also given the position as the head of the family and the women has the function of supplementing him. However, the ideal images are changing over time (ibid).

In societies, the rights of men and women stems from the religious and legal scripts. These sources are used by scholars to judge the equality between both genders. For example the rights of divorce, voting rights and heritage rights, are examples that reflect the rights men and women hold in society. However, how the laws should be interpreted and the ability to draw conclusions in judging the role of both genders is a question that needs deeper knowledge.

To observe the daily lives is perhaps the most efficient way of judging what roles men and women have in a society, no matter what the society’s ideal image is according to the laws or religious scripts. This can be done by scrutinizing the way they collaborate and respect each other. The people of a society might strongly reflect equality and an androgynous society, but within the family the case might be different (ibid).

This study shows the difficulty that women face when they come to Sweden. In their home countries her role might be interpreted differently, compared to Sweden. For example respondent 2 narrated that it was her duty to take care of the household and the children because her husband worked full-time. This prevented her from finding job. According to her, her child and the family was the first priority.

"You have to take care of your child, which makes it too late to start working. Children need time. I have the entire household responsibility, because my husband works. He has to commute which is very time consuming. I have to do the shopping, take care of the car, wash and clean”

(Q 8:1, Respondent 2).

In general, all women in this study indicated that for them the well-being of their family and the future of their children is the most precious. This encouraged them and gave them the strength to fight.

"They have done a lot for my children and I would not move from here because my children like it here [...] my children have received top marks in school and I want them to have a bright future”

(Q 8:2, Respondent 5).
Hofstedt (cited in Öberg, 1997) found that the Scandinavian countries are the most tolerant in accepting men’s role in taking care of the household. Activities such as cleaning the house, doing the laundry, cooking food and taking care of children are some of the common activities for men. Other countries that are considered being strongly masculine are Japan, Switzerland, Germany, Mexico and Italy. In contrast, those who have weaker masculinity in their society are for example Sweden, Finland, Thailand, Norway and Denmark. This signifies that a person coming from a strongly masculine country face the difficulty to adjust to the Swedish society, as some of the activities are considered of a less masculine nature to them.

The traditional gender roles clash with the western one’s when immigrant groups settle down in Sweden. Many people are flexible when they come to Sweden. They change their clothing style, language and work differently. However, the problems arise when they are asked to change their way of behaving as a man or woman and to modify the values that they have been brought up with.

8.1 The role of women in the family

It is often said that if a woman of the family suffer, the whole family suffers.

One of the counselors working in the municipality said that women take longer than men do to get a job. This has to do with the fact that women get pregnant and have other responsibilities home, which prevents them from joining the labour market (Björklund, 2010). Similarly, one of the respondents in the study argued that she felt it was a necessity to be with her son, until he was able to express himself in Swedish. She would not accept letting him be in nursery alone without him being able to communicate.

"I have to be with my son in kindergarten when my husband works full time. He cannot tell the teachers what he wants"

(Q 8:3, Respondent 2).

The same woman also felt that she was being discriminated by employers, who refused to hire her because she had a son. According to her, they argued that it would be better if she stayed home to take care of him. This is a problem that occurs on a frequent basis, not only for immigrant women, but it is a general gender discriminating problem. Barreto, Ryan and Schmitt (2009) discuss “the maternal wall”, which describes the vulnerability that mothers face due to workplace bias and discrimination. Studies have showed that employees face the trouble to manage the demands of jobs and career and family obligations. Psychological and sociological literature has implied that women end up spending more hours in the household work and child care than men do, no matter what status or working position they have. Moreover, women are more likely to reduce their working hours and change schedule for children. Studies within social science have also revealed that unequal labour division at home affects women negatively. It does not only affect their earnings, but also limits their chances to achieve promotion in their career (Baretto.et al, 2009).
9 Discrimination

According to Diskrimineringsombudsmannen discrimination means per se any form of unfair treatment that categorizes people based on prejudice. People who belong to the norm believe that they have the power to discriminate those who are in minority, who in turn feel limited in their ability to speak up. Discrimination is not limited to certain areas or situations. The word discrimination is not used on daily basis, instead people prefer to use words such as ‘treated differently’, ‘unfairly treated’ and ‘excluded’ (both mentally and physically) (DO rapport, 2010). Two of the respondent in this study formulated themselves in a similar way:

“You felt different and you felt differently treated when you came here”

(Q 9:1, Respondent 3).

“When I came to Sweden in the beginning, I wanted to invite Swedes in order to get to know them and learn the language. But unfortunately, no one invited us back. This was something common in my country (that you go and visit each other), but here it was apparently different”

(Q 9:2, Respondent 2).

Many of the women that were interviewed in this study actually perceive that there is a sense of discrimination against them. These women felt that they were not given enough attention by people since they felt that they lacked the ability to express themselves properly in Swedish.

“I was surprised that people were so cold. Nobody wanted to listen. On the street, when I went over and spoke to them in English (when I said "excuse me"), they became afraid and did not want to answer”

(Q 9:3, Respondent 3).

Although there is no evidence of actual discrimination in the form of court order, discrimination takes place in different areas in society like in the labour market and housing related issues. Sometimes it is difficult to define what discrimination is because it is more or less hidden. Regardless of whether discrimination actually occurs or not, the fact remains that immigrants experience that they are in fact treated differently (Uplevelser av Diskriminering, 2010).

Moreover the study has shown that employers do not wish to employ immigrants, who lack adequate skills in the Swedish language. One woman felt that she was treated unfairly in a job interview, where she was asked to improve her language skills, although she could speak fluent English and despite having worked as a lecturer at a university in her home country. She was told that she needed to have recommendation letters from Swedish speaking people, which she did not have. From her experience, she felt that Swedes in general are afraid of changes. They are scared of people who want to modify a system that they are comfortable with.

“When I applied for a job at a university, I was questioned if I could speak fluent Swedish. I said that I only spoke English and was able to teach in English. But I did not get the job because they felt that I was not sufficiently

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5 An administrative agency that works against discrimination in Sweden.
skilled in the language and needed to learn more. In addition, I needed a recommendation letter written by Swedes to get the job.”

(Q 9:4, Respondent 2).

Another woman argued that her boss refused to talk to her, which made her feel uncomfortable at her workplace.

"In the beginning, I felt as if Swedes did not want anything to do with immigrants. I felt that my manager did not want to talk to me. It felt really hard at first to practice where your boss does not want to meet you”

(Q 9:5, Respondent 1).

Furthermore, this investigation has revealed that it is not just the employers who accounts for the discrimination in the labour market. Many officials in the municipalities and other government related organs consciously and sometimes unconsciously restrict individuals to step into the labour market.

"When I wanted to open my own shop, I was stopped by the municipality to purchase a suitable hall. It felt as if the municipality came up with reasons of not letting me buy it. Afterwards, I could read a document, where it said that I was not capable of starting my own business. In a conversation between two employees (in the document), it was written that my husband and I were bluffing and that we had to stay in Sweden for a long time to start up our own business. I think the reason was that the premise was located in a Swedish area”

(Q 9:6, Respondent 3).

There have been several studies that have shown various ways in which discrimination against immigrants and people with foreign background is present. Young people with foreign background have a harder time in the labour market than young people with Swedish background. According to Rauhut and Blomberg (2003) the problem stems, firstly, from the educational system that is framed according to Swedish values and secondly because generally immigrants suffer from poorer housing and health. The problem lays in the social structures, which increases the gaps between immigrants and Swedes. Anderson argues that the former labour migration during the 1970s has contributed to these increased gaps and the segregation that exist today (Rauhut.et al, 2003). To make changes, it is important that all take responsibility together in society-right down to the individual level. It is about people’s attitudes and skills. In his opinion nobody should ever face discrimination in contact with authorities.

**Government Directives**


“with the introduction of the new Act, much of the earlier anti-discrimination legislation in different sectors of the community and on different grounds was combined into a common framework”

(Ministry of Integration and gender equality, 2009).
The incentive is ultimately to combat discrimination on effective and transparent regulatory structures. The aim is to make people aware of the new penalty and compensation for discrimination that is being introduced and to effectively prevent people from discriminating others. One of the concrete steps that were taken is to merge four separate discrimination ombudsmen into one centralized authority (ibid).
The Swedish language has been one of the prerequisites for immigrants to be part of the Swedish society and therefore, according to the Swedish government, immigrants are expected to learn it as quickly as possible. Swedish politicians argue that it serves as a platform to embrace the values of a new society.

"For me, the language is the key and the treasure to be able to be part of the society."

(Q 10:1, Respondent 2).

All women that were interviewed narrated that by learning the language they felt part of the Swedish society. According to Brnic (2002), who have conducted a similar study, came to the conclusion that isolation and socioeconomic marginalization can be countered by learning the language which is part of the integration process. A key factor in integration is to start to learn the language and to become part of the Swedish society. One of the respondents in this study argued that she was desperate to learn the language because she did not understand what people were talking about on the buses.

"When I sat in the bus, I wanted to know what everyone were talking about. What if they said mean things about me!"

(Q 10:2, Respondent 2).

On similar grounds, respondent 3 argued that she felt a necessity to learn Swedish as she felt ridiculed when she expressed herself in English. Mostly, all women in this investigation felt that they were anxious to communicate in Swedish during their first months in Sweden. But after having lived in Sweden for a while they felt more comfortable and their confidence grew.

"It is important to speak the language of the country that you live in to be able to make contact with people. It gives no good impression if you speak English. Then people will think that you just arrived in Sweden or that you are ignorant. It is difficult at first, but you have to give it time”.

(Q 10:3, Respondent 3).

The difficulty, though, according to one of the respondents was that she felt that Swedes are very conservative and do not willingly hang-out with immigrants in private-life. For this reason, she was discouraged to associate with them.

"To learn Swedish is important, it is not enough to know English [...] It is important to learn the (Swedish) language, but it does not mean that you have to hang out with Swedes. In the beginning when I came to Sweden, I wanted to invite Swedes to get to know them and learn the language. But unfortunately, no one invited us back. This was something normal in my country (that you go and visit each other), but here it was different"

(Q 10:4, Respondent 2).
On the other hand, one of the respondents felt that people in the neighborhood were supportive and humble to talk to, as well as the teachers and classmates in school.

*You got to know people at school and your neighbors who I thought were very nice*”

(Q 10:5, Respondent 3).

**Government Directives**

According to the fact sheet published by the Ministry of Integration and Gender Equality “all new arrivals are entitled to basic education in the Swedish language but the standards of teaching vary considerably” (Ministry of Integration and gender equality, 2009). Some changes were made in 2009, where compulsory final tests were introduced to pass the courses. The government has organised special funds to improve the skills of the teachers up until 2010. In October 2008, the Swedish Schools Inspectorate was started. Their task was to supervise and check on the teaching qualities of SFI.

The Pilot project in the SPES that has been discussed previously in the thesis, has started to distribute a performance-based bonus to encourage immigrants to learn the language. Those who complete it within 12 months are entitled to a performance-based bonus that varies depending on the course that they have taken. The bonus ranges from 6000, 8000 to 12000 SEK (Skolverket sfi-bouns, 2010). One of the respondents felt that this was an encouragement by the government to complete the studies at a faster pace. She felt that the bonus motivated her to work harder.

"It's good that you get money if you study SFI as quickly as possible, it makes you motivated"

(Q 10:6, Respondent 3).

There are many people who have different levels of education completed in their home countries. Those who have completed foreign qualifications at universities are given the opportunity to study at higher education organised by the government. Funds have been raised so that people with higher education are able to take supplementary courses, especially in areas such as health, medical care and teaching.

Those who are entitled to study in SFI are adults (from the year that your turn 16), who do not have basic knowledge in Swedish. It is a requirement for those who want to study at SFI to belong to a local municipality and that each person is responsible and should have control over how their own education is structured. The below quotation strengthens this argument, which indicates that it is up to each and every person to sign up for SFI and to be in charge of their own education procedure.

“I had to sign up for SFI by myself”

(Q 10:7, Respondent 3).

Nonetheless, each municipality is responsible for adults who are entitled to SFI that they also receive appropriate education that facilitates for them to get a job. It is the obligation of the municipality that the education starts within a period of three months. The municipality is also in charge of the quality of the education (Skolverket SFI, 2010).
10.1 Personal responsibility and determination

Referring to Brnic’s (2002) article ‘På tal om invandrare, integration och svenskhetshe’ she discusses the importance of maintaining your own values and at the same time adjust to the new values of the country. She emphasizes the importance to engage in learning the new culture and take own responsibility of becoming part of the Swedish society (Brnic,2004). The respondents in this investigation argued that it was important for them to adapt to the norms and values of the new system. All women believed that since the culture was different, it was important to embrace the new values to blend in and to succeed. The respondents strongly believed that a combination of own values and the new values, both are necessary to lead a successful life.

"The culture, people and the religion is different. One must realize that there is a distinction (between the two people) to be able to blend in"

(Q 10:8, Respondent 4).

Moreover, the study has also revealed that personal determination is necessary to achieve personal goals. Respondent 1 pinpoints that finding a job and to learn the Swedish language are two factors that are important to integrate.

"Having work is important! All my life I have worked. In my country I worked for 25 years. I want a job!

(Q 10:9, Respondent 1).

And they emphasize that they strongly condemn those who misuse the benefits given to immigrants by the government.

"(I) Do not want to live on welfare! You have to decide to move forward"

(Q 10:10, Respondent 3).

"You have to find a job, not just sit at home and go on welfare. One should work and pay taxes. One should not just sit at home"

(Q 10:11, Respondent 5).

The language was difficult at first, but the willpower exists to get better and better. I fight for my family and wish in the future to have a permanent job. A tip for newly arrivals is to keep on struggling and set up goals"

(Q 10:12, Respondent 4).

One of the respondents argued that Sweden is a peaceful country where people have opportunities to lead a successful life, yet, there is lack of motivation and encouragement by the government. However, she strongly believes that one has to take own responsibility to meet people and to get introduced in order to get a job and to learn Swedish.
"In Sweden, it is peace and freedom, which allows one to focus [...] I'm ambitious, but there's nothing that drives me forward, I cannot compete with myself. All teachers here say that all are equal, which I think is strange. In my country one had to compete in school and we were used to that students were on different levels. I live in a village outside Stockholm, so it is not easy to get in touch with people. One must take the initiatives to introduce yourself, show yourself, to get a job”

(Q 10:13, Respondent 2).

Furthermore, the study has shown that women struggle to adjust to the new system. One of the respondents was surprised by the fact that people in Sweden follow laws, which was something she was not used to. However, all women were strongly dedicated to combine work and studies and to excel in their work.

Some women believed that they independently have to reach out to employers and find their own way through to the labour market.

"I asked a friend who was sitting in the bus if she could help me to get a job. She talked to her manager and on the following day I was called for an interview. After one week I got the job!

(Q 10:14, Respondent 5).
11 Residential segregation

The Residential segregation aspect is relevant in the thesis as all the women that were interviewed lived in suburb areas, sometimes also referred to as the segregated areas that have a high immigrant population. This section will discuss the segregation that has risen from the 60’s and the consequences it has yielded today and in what ways it has affected the integration policies in Sweden.

11.1 ‘Miljon programmet’

The ‘miljon’ programme started after the Second World War, where a huge housing shortage compelled Swedish politicians to solve the problem. During a ten year long period, from 1965 up until 1975 the plan was to build one million homes and hence the name of the project became- the ‘Miljon Programmet’ (Röby, 1996). According to many specialists the project was seen as an efficient and quick solution to the residential shortage during urbanization. In other words, the programme was a short-term solution.

Several high building areas were built outside the cities, generally, with bad commuting and bad service in comparison to other areas. This eventually gave the impression that these areas were not good enough live in. Those families (dominantly working-class) who used to live there earlier decided to move out. At this time immigrants were streaming into Sweden and the authorities used a practical solution by referring immigrants to move to these suburban areas, without considering the segregation effects it was to bring in the future. Ever since, these areas have predominantly had a high foreigner population, with people from different ethical backgrounds (ibid).

Some examples of such segregated areas are Rinkeby, Råslätt, Flemingsberg, Rosengården and Angered, which are located in different areas in Sweden. The project was meant to reduce the gaps between immigrants and Swedes, but today it has been revealed that it had a paradoxical effect (Kamali, 2006). The reason behind involving this part in this investigation is because most interviews were conducted with women living in Flemingsberg, an area that came into being during the ‘miljon programmet’.

Unfortunately, the same trends are occurring even today. Two of the respondents in this study argued that they received support from their regional municipality to find an apartment, which was located in Flemingsberg.

“I got support from the municipality to find housing, since I came with my children alone to Sweden. After 20 days, the children started school and I did not want to move because the children had begun to feel at home”

(Q 11:1, Respondent 5).

Nevertheless, the administrative authorities are not entirely responsible for locating immigrants in suburbs. Many immigrants are forced due to their low economy and desire to be around people from their own communities. One of the women narrated that the reason why she moved to Stockholm was because she missed people from her home country and in the hope to improve the poor economic and social conditions she used to live in.

"We decided to move to Stockholm, because there were more immigrants here, especially from my home country. Where we lived before there lived no people from my country. I was feeling really bad at that time. Everything was new and I suffered from psychological problems at the same time as we
were living on very low income. One cannot believe how we (me and my son) were able to live on merely 4000kr per month. At that time I had no support from my husband because he had left me and worked as a dishwasher”.

(Q 11:2, Respondent 3).

Similarly two women felt that by living in Stockholm they would have bigger opportunities and not miss out on being in touch with people from their home countries.

“I live in a village and therefore it is not so easy to contact someone. It is better to live in a larger city, where you can create contacts with more people”

(Q 11:3, Respondent 2).

“We received a notice from the Swedish Board of Migration that we could move (from Stockholm), but we cannot do that. They say we can get housing, but they cannot provide us with a job. We chose not to move since the kids play football and enjoy school with their friends. It feels right to live in Stockholm and I do not want to move up to Kiruna. I also have my sister and other people who I know from my country living here”

(Q 11:4, Respondent 4).

This indicates that these women feel comfortable to be in touch with people who they know and who are in the same situation as them. Most immigrants wish to move to bigger cities where they live amongst people they feel comfortable with. However, studies have also shown that discrimination in the housing market occur to high extent, which force immigrants to live in segregated areas. This will be presented more in detail later in the thesis.

During a long period of time the Swedish governments aimed to ‘integrate immigrants’ through the ‘miljon’ project and a lot of work had been done in the municipalities to make this possible. A report that was published by the Swedish government ‘Statens offentliga utredningar-den segregerade integrationen’ in 2006 clearly states that this project has been inefficient in terms of ‘integrating immigrants’ and that the segregation trend has been even stronger ever since. The project has been criticized for having given rise to isolation rather than inclusion and social bonding (ibid).

Andersson (2007) states in his article ‘Boende och segregation’ the importance of where and how a person chooses to live in a society. He points out that the location of the residence, how it looks, the neighborhood, and the quality of service offered affects a person’s everyday life, social network, education and carrier. The ‘miljon’ programme has given rise to alienation and segregation in the labour market as well as the social life. He further states some fundamental questions that have been discussed for the past decades. He questions if a person gets poorer by living amongst poorer? And if it is more difficult to find a job if a person lives in a suburban area where the majority of people are unemployed (Andersson, 2007)?

According to Integrationsverkets’s report (2005) it is stated that the residential segregation in Sweden is a problem mainly due to increasing social and economic gaps between different population groups. When people with low income and limited possibilities in the labour market gather at the same place and when people with higher incomes decide to live separately, not only does the distance bring about social and economic distances, but also physical
aloofness. This results in alienation and lack of understanding of other people’s situation, which in turn could run the chances of insecurity and high criminality rates.

The utmost reason why residential segregation takes place is due to socioeconomic gaps that occur due to people’s limited choice of possibility to decide where to live. This has mostly to do with economic constraints, which puts limits on people’s ability to afford places in other ‘more’ expensive and attractive areas. Most rentable apartments are located at the same place, which leaves people with low incomes with little of a choice (Integrationsverket, 2005).

11.2 Discrimination in the housing market

Different actors in the society play their own significant role in discriminating and causing ethical segregation in the housing market. It is important to point out those structures, systems and actors in a society that have influence in the housing market. Both the report from Integrationsverket (2005) and Anderson (2007) refer to the model, which indicate that discrimination is institutional which they name as institutional discrimination. Institutional discrimination has its origin in the housing regularities of Sweden where decisions are taken whether or not a person has the right to co-operative apartments or not.

Counselors working in these housing agencies are also to be accounted for being responsible for institutional discrimination. The same counselors also fall in the category of preference discrimination, where mainly the focus has been on so called gate keeper’s (estate agents and other housing related counselors) and people’s negative attitudes towards certain groups in society (Andersson, 2007). The behavior of the majority population affects the housing segregation in a country. Examples of such behavior would be to avoid living in segregated areas and create hindrances for immigrants to settle down outside these areas (Integrationsverket, 2005).

Government directives

The Government has initiated local development agreements, with the aim to narrow the exclusion of people living in urban areas outside the larger cities. The Government has developed an agreement with 21 metropolitan municipalities with the support of the police authorities, Swedish Social Insurance Agency and the SPES to sign local agreements with local municipalities to make changes. These agreements are necessary in order to effectively coordinate different actor’s effort, especially municipalities and agencies, into minimizing the exclusion of people that exists in these suburbs. Another concrete step towards making this change has been by opening up start-offices that support and provide guidance to those who wish to start their own businesses. These offices are to be linked with already existing municipalities and agencies that specialize in this field (Swedish Integration Policy, 2009).
12 The role of the administrative authorities

The role of the Swedish authorities have had a significant impact on this investigation, as these are the first agencies that immigrants, who come as refugees or asylum seekers come in contact with. This section will focus on the responsibilities of immigrant related authorities’, and identify whether the roles of the authorities coincide with the stories narrated by the immigrant women.

12.1 What are their responsibilities?

As discussed previously in the thesis, the majority of the people who come to Sweden receive assistance from a number of different administrative authorities. Three of those that are the most important are the Swedish Board of Migration, the local municipalities and the local SPES. These are the foremost administrative authorities that guide and support newly arrived immigrants to map out their lives and provide guidance in terms of economic assistance, education assistance and trainee opportunities.

According to the fact sheet published by the Ministry of Integration and Gender Equality (2009) “the municipalities have a great responsibility for many issues that are important for integration”. The municipalities are responsible for:

- Schooling
- Housing planning
- Health and Medical services in collaboration with “central government, municipalities and county councils in the area if integration” (Ministry of Integration and Gender Equality, 2009).

The reform for faster introduction of new arrivals in working and social life will involve close coordination with the SPES that will hopefully utilize the skills of the new arrivals better than before. According to the directives given by the government, the SPES are responsible for:

- setting up an individual introduction plan involving education and working experience that will provide courses in the Swedish language, civic orientation and employment preparation.
- giving immigrants social allowance for participating in the introduction activities while working.
- Sending immigrants to a new actor- an introduction guide- that provides assistance to the new arrivals to find a job. This gives them the opportunity to produce a CV document where they put in writing their previous working experience, education and future plans (Poles, 2010)

This study has shown that all respondents received assistance from these three authorities at some point in their lives. As mentioned earlier, most of the immigrant related duties of the municipalities will be transferred to the SPES. Thirteen municipalities in Sweden have already run a pilot project where most of the responsibilities concerning introduction of new arrivals have been granted to the SPES. However from December 1 2010, there will be a permanent change. All municipalities in Sweden will undergo this change. This investigation has showed that the introduction plan has in fact been helpful for all respondents in this study.
Furthermore, the study has also indicated that the intense collaboration between the municipality and the SPES has had a positive effect on the life’s of the newly arrivals.

**Specific steps in the introduction plan**

- **Step-in jobs**
  The “step-in” jobs are provided for the unemployed who are given the chance to join the labour market and improve their language skills. The step-in jobs are combined with courses in the Swedish language and a subsidy amount of 75% of employer wage cost.

- **Introduction dialogue**
  The introduction dialogue seeks to firmly establish a dialogue with the new arrival. The new arrivals are asked what they wish to take courses in and what they desire to work with in the future. This is a way of matching the skills of the new arrival, the demand of the labour-market and the offering of courses. The dialogue will also involve a plan for employment, selection of residence, selection of courses and other initiatives.

- **Mentoring schemes**
  Due to a lack of social networks, new arrivals find it challenging to become part of the society. Mentorship will be efficient to provide a social network and skill development. The government aims to start a three-year mentorship project, where new arrivals are matched with mentors depending on their professional skills and education. The project will start between 2010 and 2012.

- **Organised resettlement**
  The government has made efforts in encouraging municipalities across Sweden to receive immigrants. Most often new arrivals wish to settle down in smaller municipalities close to bigger cities. Instead the government initiates efforts so that new arrivals move to municipalities where there are bigger education and occupation opportunities.

  Moreover, better surveys on asylum seekers’ situation in Sweden, with collaboration with the Swedish Migration Board and the SPES, will be improved. As well as to form dialogues with value-based organisations such as the state, municipalities and non-profit actors on the issue of integration is currently under progress.

- **Better Education, Occupation, Entrepreneurship and Vocational training for adults**
  The Government has decided to take measures to promote employment, as this will widen the opportunities for successful integration. The concrete steps taken are to reduce tax on earned income for both the employer and the employee. Measures will be taken to promote more jobs and support those who are unemployed to return to the labour market. The employers will be subsidized to hire an unemployed. The jobseekers are given assistance in job-seeking activities, which are individually adapted. The aim of the government is to ensure that those who are unemployed should receive assistance to start relevant education and to take part in job matching activities as soon as they arrive in Sweden.

  In many cases, immigrants find it difficult to establish their own business in Sweden due to obstacles in arranging finance for their companies. The government has therefore introduced qualified services that facilitates for them to develop their ideas. One example is to have
personal mentors that give them the chance to participate in schemes and networks. Moreover the Agency for Economic and Regional Growth will start up a dialogue with the banking sector, which will help immigrants to receive finance for their businesses.

In addition, the government, through the National Agency for Education, according to the new guidelines, will continue to support teachers to develop their skills in teaching SAS. Unfortunately, there is a lack of qualified teachers who teach mother tongue in schools. However, measures have been taken to launch distance teaching for pupils who have a non-Swedish background in schools.

As mentioned earlier, new arrivals are entitled to basic education in the Swedish language, however, the methods of teaching vary considerably across Sweden. In 2009 compulsory national final test were introduced. Efforts and funds have been raised by the government to improve teacher’s abilities to teach SFI. In 2008, the Swedish Schools Inspectorate was given the task to monitor the teaching of SFI.

For those who come to Sweden with any academic studies completed, universities and other institutes of higher education will in the future provide supplementary courses in the Swedish language. This entered into force in 2009 and will continue until 2011.

Furthermore, funds have been raised to provide supplementary courses on an academic level, especially in the field of health care, medical services and schools (teachers) as there is a shortage of personnel in those fields in Sweden. Measures have also been taken to recognize health and medical care qualifications that immigrants have completed in their home countries. On general terms, efforts will be made to recognise foreign qualifications so that people with foreign background are able to get jobs in their own field.

Additionally, emphasis has been put on vocational training as it is important to break the exclusion of immigrants to enter into the work force. It is important to include people at work places in order to give them an insight of professional life, which will make it easier for them to obtain a job. The task of the government in the near future will be to drastically increase the number of places in vocational courses, especially for those who have graduated from upper secondary and secondary school. The Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education is the main agency that has the duty to validate foreign vocational skills.

The immigrants themselves believe that vocational experience is beneficial as it helps them increase the knowledge in the Swedish language and at the same give them the chance to use their language skills in practical life. Meanwhile they also realize how to match their skills with the requirements in the Swedish labour market. Immigrants are also able to attain recommendation letters from trainee places, which widen their chances to obtain a job.

12.2 The story of the respondents’

This section will give an insight of the respondent’s journey in Sweden and the role of the Swedish authorities in their struggle to integrate into the Swedish society. As mentioned earlier, the complete quotations are presented in the appendix section and thus the reader is highly encouraged to refer to this section in case of uncertainty. Yet, explanations are followed, throughout the section, after each quotation to clarify the main points in each narrative.

“After one week in Sweden, I came into contact with a man named Allan who worked for the municipality[...]I was sent to learn Swedish. He explained what it was like to live in Sweden and asked me what I could see
myself working with in the future. I told him I worked as a teacher in my country, but he explained to me that I could not work as a teacher, because it would require training and it would take time to complete it in Sweden. [...] After six months, the SPES was also involved where a man named Harold supported me. All four counselors worked with me and were in contact with each other. Harold taught me how to write a cover letter and gave ideas on how to look for jobs [...] I started by taking a course called Child-care for six months and then I took a course in the restaurant field. Michael told me to take the course because we owned a restaurant in my country and because I had experience in that field.

When I got my first job, the SPES paid 75% of my salary. I got my first job with the help of the municipality. My current boss was looking for a cook and the municipality helped to match so that I got the job. I have learned a lot during my internship. The language has been the most important and that I have developed the courage to talk! I'm not as scared as I was in the beginning”

(Q 12:1, Respondent 1).

In this case, it has been evident that the municipality of Huddinge and the SPES of Huddinge have been two essential actors that have provided her with the guidance to obtain a job. According to the introduction plan, immigrants are entitled to SFI and introduction activities. In this case, she was given the opportunity to decide what she wished to work with in the future. The counselors ensured to make use of the skills that she had from her previous work and encouraged her to take courses in the same field. Both the counselors in the municipality and the SPES have collaborated with the aim to utilize most of the skills and experience she had obtained. The result has been a combination of both the practical and the theoretical part. When it came to the Swedish language, she had the chance to develop her skills through trainee places and courses in SFI and SAS.

“After having lived in Sweden for five months and two weeks I found a job on my own as a lecturer. I sent the resume and cover letter myself through the Internet. It is not difficult to do it yourself. The municipality helped me to receive education in the language. I was allowed to start at level D, since I could speak English. I passed the SFI in six months [...] neither the municipality nor the SPES helped me with SFI, I went there myself. I think that the SPES is not used to supporting well-educated people. I suggested and gave them ideas in what ways they could assist me. They are able to support those who are less educated, and therefore they could not help me. At the moment I'm unemployed, but I have scheduled meetings with the SPES once a month”.

(Q 12:2, Respondent 2).

In her situation, the municipality and the SPES have proved to be unsuccessful in their attempt to integrate women who have completed high level of academic studies to join the labour force. This story reveals the challenge faced by the SPES, and to some extent, the municipality to assist new arrivals to find a job suitable for someone with higher education. Could it be the incompetence of the administrative authorities to help out highly educated immigrants to step into the labour market?
This investigation has showed that new arrivals in Sweden, who have a university level degree, take own initiatives to find jobs, but due to discrimination (previously discussed), this does not seem to be easy. In this situation, both the authorities and the immigrant are trapped in a situation where they are unable to find a solution. Yet, the positive aspect in this case has been the SFI education that is provided on different levels, which allow immigrants to start SFI depending on previous educational background. In this case, respondent 2, did not have to start from level A, instead she got the opportunity to get started from level D, which is more of an advanced level.

"When I came to Sweden, I came in contact with a counselor at the Swedish Board of Migration, but I did not think he was very nice. It felt as if he treated me unfairly [...] After some time I got another counselor whose name was Taher, who was really nice. I was severely depressed and Taher ensured to take care of my child. [...] At that time, we lived on 4000kr per month that we received from the Swedish Board of Migration. After receiving the residence permit, we lived in Lindesberg Municipality in Örebro, but after some time, we moved to Stockholm.

It was hard to find an apartment here, but after a lot of difficulties we got a house to live in for a year that we were allowed to borrow from a man. You need to have a house to be registered at the municipality[...]

(Q 12:3, Respondent 3).

The experience of this woman is very similar to respondent 1. In this case a good collaboration has taken place between all three actors; the municipality, the Swedish Board of Migration and the SPES. The counselors from these authorities have made a remarkable work in launching her career life. She argues that the municipality took into consideration what she wished to do in the future, helped her to write a CV and inspired her to develop ideas about what she would like to work with. She told them that she wanted to start her own business. After having discussed her future plans, they encouraged her to take a vocational educational course, which gave her a platform to study entrepreneurship and at the same time learn Swedish. This eventually inspired her to start her own business, which she succeeded to do.

" [...] After obtaining the residence permit, we received financial support from the municipality through a counselor. The counselor suggested that I should start at SFI and after I had begun SFI, I started to take a childcare course. Since I have a degree in teaching, I wanted to do something in that field. I had to get a degree (Swedish valid degree). During my childcare course I was sent for training in a nursery school. The staff seemed to like me and I got a full time job schedule. But I still don’t have a permanent position [...] I study SAS in the evenings three days a week. I’m struggling and hoping to get a degree in child-care and a permanent job in the future "

(Q 12:4, Respondent 4).

The practical work has been beneficial in this case. The woman was able to study SFI and at the same time take a child-care course, which involved a lot of trainee jobs, which helped her to learn the language more quickly. From this experience she felt more confident to talk to Swedes and to take initiatives to find work on her own. After having been successful in finding a job at a nursery, the SPES and the municipality left her to manage it on her own.
"From the National Board of Migration I received assistance from a woman named Marie-Louise. Marie-Louise helped me to find a place to live, prior to my residence permit. After twenty days my children started school and after four months, they started in a regular school. After that I came in contact with a woman in the introduction unit. The municipality paid me 7800 SEK per month with my two children. I got my first job through my friend, who lived next door to me. I came in contact with the chief and after my first interview I got a job at a sandwich factory. I was glad I did not take social allowance. I did not want to live on welfare. The municipality suggested that I should start SFI. I did that for two months, but I could not continue because I was working approximately twelve hours a day. In my country I studied in high school and one year at university. After the factory went bankrupt, I got my second job, in the elderly care, that I found myself. Ever since then I have not had any contact with the SPES. Today I am hourly paid, but I need a degree to get a permanent job”

(Q 12:5, Respondent 5).

After having been granted residence permit, the woman was neither supported by the SPES nor the municipality in her struggle to find work. Indeed she was aided by a counselor in the municipality to get an apartment, which she was very grateful for. She did study SFI for merely two months after which she got employed at a sandwich factory. She regretted that she was not able to finish the SFI course, but for her, finding a job was more important. This story reveals the strong will-power of immigrant women to get a job. However, the repercussions became that she could not complete SFI and SAS, which are necessary requirements to get a permanent job, which she did not do. After having lost her job in the sandwich factory, due to bankruptcy, she had to return to school to finish her studies. Restart the school education was not something these immigrant women found motivating, especially in a country that was unknown to them.

12.3 What has been the result?

From the conducted interviews the following can be concluded:

- New arrivals are entitled to SFI and to take part in introduction activities as soon as they have been granted residence permit

- The counselors either from the municipality or the SPES or both form a dialogue with the new arrival and ask him/her questions regarding their previous education and work experiences. At the same time also trying to find out their future plans and their desires to work within Sweden.

- Immigrants receive assistance from authorities to write a document containing educational and working merits.

- Encouragement to start a vocational education that gives them an opportunity to find work faster. Combining practical and theoretical work encourage them to learn the language more quickly and at the same time boosting their self-esteem to communicate in Swedish.
They run higher chances of getting a job if you have completed SFI, SAS and completed trainee jobs. The experience facilitates for them to form a social network and acquire references that smoothes the progress of attaining a job.

- Receive assistance from the municipality to find an apartment.
- Self-determination and own responsibility is necessary to become part of the labour market.
- Highly educated immigrants find it difficult to find jobs in their own field. In some cases, the administrative authorities lack the ability to support new arrivals who wish to work as non-manual workers. This becomes even more challenging by the fact that discrimination among officials who work with immigrants and housing segregation take place, which is a commonly occurring problem in Sweden.
- All respondents in this study emphasize that they are resistant to accept income support (social allowance) from the government.

### 12.4 The dilemma of the authorities to support highly educated immigrants

A report written by the integration agency in Sweden, questions why foreign university graduates end up in extension studies in Sweden where they are only prepared to work as workers (vuxenutbildning). According to Integrationsverket’s report (2005, despite the fact that large numbers of immigrants that come to Sweden have an academic level degree, they are stuck in low level studies and unfortunately end up staying there for an unnecessarily long time. According to the report, this has to do with structural hinders in the Swedish system consisting of the labour force, social insurance, education and study grant and on top of that the negative attitudes of officials and counselors in governmental positions that make immigrants trapped in a situation where it is difficult to find a way out. The majority of these immigrants are women, who are stuck in these low level training courses for extensive period of time.

This stems from the fact that foreign degrees and work experience is not valid in Sweden. Instead immigrants are forced to take extensive courses to complement or even restart the same studies they have already completed in their home countries. A consequence of this is that educated immigrants have to return to high school studies to learn the language and to get a validated degree, which prevents them from entering into the labour market, and hence the Swedish society, since they have to be in school for a pointlessly long time. Even if they wish to start university, they are unable to do so due to lack of verification of a degree that they have achieved in their home country. By sending new arrivals to study at lower level education is seen as a way to locate immigrants at the same place, as they do not have any other occupation (Integrationsverket, 2005).

The aim of the Swedish government is to make them self-supporting as quickly as possible and since it takes too long to get a valid Swedish degree, the government does not support people who chose to study at university level. In many cases for those who have a university degree from their home country need to complete their degree, which can take unnecessarily long time. This discourages them to actually make the effort (Bjurling, 2004). In order to start university, they are compelled to take study loans, which they find risky as they cannot afford to be unemployed and indebted after having completed their studies. Furthermore, lack of
information from counselors and the unawareness of the Swedish educational system make them start any course or education that they have been told (Integrationsverket, 2005).

Previous studies have shown that the SPES has a dominating role in preventing foreigners from receiving correct information of what they should study. Not based on the results of this study, but according to a report by the National Agency for Higher Education written by Bjurling (2004), the SPES often do not take into account immigrants’ previous knowledge and instead refer them to unskilled jobs and low-level education, which puts them in a complicated situation. Sejdevik pinpoints "that there is an exhibition of foreign-born persons in the labour market even before they have been able to enter into it" (a connotation cited in Bjurling, 2004). In this investigation, respondent 3 narrated that she felt discriminated by a counselor in the municipality and respondent 2 felt discriminated at a job interview.
Part 3

Part 3, which is the last part of the thesis, is devoted to summarise, discuss and conclude the findings of the thesis. The bulk of the discussion will be based on answering the overall research question(s) of the thesis and in general terms present its findings. This part is based on the previous parts of the thesis, from which the conclusions are drawn.
13 Concluding discussion

The prime minister of Sweden, Fredrik Reinfeldt states the following about the Swedish society

"[I] is an open society which has demonstrated a will that people must be able to come from different backgrounds, believe in different gods or not believe in any god at all. Be able to live side by side, together, in our open society."

(CNN News international, 2010).

Referring to the statement made by the Prime Minister of Sweden, the question rises whether the Swedish society actually delivers in these respects or not? Delving into this, this chapter will analyse and provide an answer to the overall questions of the thesis.

The first part of this section will emphasize the question: ‘What aspects facilitate for non-Swedish women to integrate into the Swedish society’? The second part of this section will discuss plausible solutions to this ongoing dilemma in Sweden. The question it seeks to answer is: ‘Do administrative authorities handle integration issues in an efficient way? And ‘What can be done to improve the present situation?

For clarification, the aspects that have been obtained, through the bottom-up approach, as being of importance in this investigation are: ‘Cultural Differences’, ‘Gender Roles’, ‘Discrimination’, ‘The Importance of the Swedish Language’, ‘Residential Segregation’ and ‘The Role of the Administrative Authorities’.

13.1 What aspects facilitate for non-Swedish women to integrate into the Swedish society?

13.1.1 Cultural clash and the role of women in different cultures

Features such as culture, identity and community are frequently associated with globalization. When ethnic groups come to Sweden, they tend to signal a threat to the host society as most of them live in segregated areas. The immigrants, on the other hand, have a desire of preserving their own identity, which can lead to exclusion and discrimination. The idea of integration started from the time that immigrants came to Sweden as guest workers in the 60s and 70s. Gradually attitudes changed. A society that was once based on an assimilation model transferred into an integration model that advocated a multicultural society. Today, Sweden is an ethno relative state, believing in acceptance, adaption and integration

The clash that occurs when a new arrival enters Sweden is called a cultural clash. Immigrants bring their own culture. However, immigrants tend to slowly adapt to the new values, and therefore it is necessary that they are given the time and support by the host society. According to scholars, the more a person engages in learning, the easier it is to become part of a system and a society that he/she is unfamiliar with. Moreover, according to the consulted scholars in this thesis the opinions of the respondents in the study, acquiring basic social skills about the host culture is a prerequisite, to avoid misunderstanding that can result in an offensive behavior. Yet, the current situation in Sweden has created, due to the ‘miljon’ project, segregated areas, which has given rise to unwillingness among some Swedes to be around immigrants and vice-versa. Studies have shown that those immigrants who are already
saddened feel even more depressed to adapt culture-friendly skills, and for that reason it is a necessity to break the segregation pattern, if the aim is truly to create a multicultural society.

Likewise, the investigation also concludes that women’s role varies depending on the culture they belong to. To talk about what rights, duties, responsibilities and work responsibilities men and women have is a very delicate issue. The ideal image is interpreted differently according to the culture and society one belongs to.

The problem immigrants usually face when they come to Sweden is lack of understanding of Swedish values. Women are not aware of the “norms” in Sweden, which they need time to recognize. This is where the authorities’ play a vital role, as these are the primary actors that immigrants are introduced to when they arrive in Sweden.

The study has also displayed that women tend to work hard for their future and refuse to return to their home-countries due to belligerent circumstances and poverty. A clash that they face though is that Sweden is considered a highly masculine country and those coming from a less masculine society find it challenging to fit in. The women in this study have argued that they are willing to change their way of dressing, the use of language and their work ethics, but they find it difficult to completely turn into a “Swede”.

A lot of the responsibilities, especially household obligations, rest on the shoulders of women. The negative part though is that it takes a longer time for women to find job in comparison to men. This has not only to do with the language problem and the dilemma of being part of an unknown society, but also the lack of a social networks, chances of them becoming pregnant and, above all, discrimination to join the labour market. The “maternal wall” is also a factor that prevents them from focusing on their work.

13.1.2 Discrimination

As presented previously, discrimination does not always mean direct insulting in its physical manner. All of the women in this study have at some point felt discriminated, which they define in words such as “treated differently”. As already mentioned this becomes even trickier by the fact that Swedes and immigrants tend to take distance from each other, especially in private-life, which causes misunderstandings between both counterparts. But as the thesis has demonstrated, it is difficult to define and detect discrimination as it is more or less hidden.

When it comes to discrimination in the labour market, most employers demand that immigrants speak fluent Swedish, which obviously is difficult for newcomers. Moreover, Swedes in general, according to the respondents, have a skeptical attitude towards structural changes. The systems should work according to the older system as changes could cause anxiety and discomfort among the Swedish population. Additionally, some employers argue that recommendation letters written in Swedish are needed to obtain a job, something that is difficult to attain having stayed in Sweden a very short time. These are some of the factors that highlight the ‘hidden’ discrimination that exists in the Swedish society.

Institutional discrimination is also a frequent problem and in fact one of the major difficulties to deal with. Officials and government related institutions account for discrimination. Both gender-related discrimination and xenophobia within the official system is a common undetected problem. Some of the counselors’ and estate agents’ negative attitude along with the xenophobia, is not only existing in the Swedish regulatory system, but also in the Swedish society. This can be discovered in the stories told by the respondents, indicating that fears within the society among the Swedish population against immigrants exist.
Discrimination is also stemming from the Swedish school system, where the educational system is framed according to Swedish values, which causes problems in the social structures. This in turn widens the gaps between immigrant and the host population, which deteriorates the segregation that is present along with, to name a few, other factors such as gender discrimination, cultural clashes and prejudices.

13.1.3 The language and self-determination

The Swedish language has proved to be one of the most important factors in the study. Not only do higher authorities in Sweden claim that basic skills in the Swedish language serve as a necessary factor to become part of the Swedish society, but the respondents have also expressed similar views. The entire study has revolved around the language aspect at one point or the other. All respondents argued that they worked very hard to learn the language as quickly as possible. Some succeeded to pass the courses in a short period of time, whereas for others it took longer.

No matter what perspective one has, the lucidity is that all women in this study performed a remarkable work in their eagerness and determination to learn the language in one way or the other. The study has also revealed that most women felt insecure and a sort of a nervousness to express themselves in a language that they lack adequate skills in. In this case a combination of practical work and to study SFI and SAS has proved to be successful to speed the process of learning Swedish. The setback though has been the lack of interaction between the host population and the newly arrived immigrants. The contribution of performance-based bonus can have a positive effect as it helps in speeding up the process to learn the language.

Own responsibility is another significant aspect that smoothes the progress of women to successfully integrate into the Swedish society. Their resistance to accept social allowance provided by the government indicates their determination towards accomplishing their goals. Moreover from the interviews conducted, the women express strong willpower in their struggle to adjust to the new society and their patience to learn the new system in order to blend in. One has to keep in mind that the process of realising the differences between two cultures is necessary to appreciate and accept the values of the host society.

13.1.4 Housing segregation

The residential segregation is also a contributing aspect that does not only widen the gap between societal groups, but also create hindrances for immigrants and the host population to associate with each other. The consequences of the decisions that were taken during the 70s have left its mark today. The bitter reality, though, is that the same trends occur, on a large scale, even today. The regional municipalities are repeating the mistakes made by the Swedish government back then. Counselors continue to guide newly arrived to settle down in these densely immigrant populated areas even though history has revealed that this has lead to isolation, which the Swedish politicians, today, yearn for shunning.

Yet, it is important to keep in mind that this is also a consequence of a system that needs to be changed. This goes back to the problem of affording to purchase apartments. The options the newly arrivals are left with is to find the cheapest apartment available, which they most likely find in the suburbs, among other immigrants. The study has also showed that people living in these areas, sacrifice the opportunity to move where the jobs are due to their children. Two of the respondents narrated that they would willingly wait until they are given apartment, for their children’s sake. Many of the respondent’s children had already started school and
enjoyed the environment they lived in, and for their sake, for their happiness they decided to continue to stay in these areas. In addition the desire of the immigrants to be around people from their respective community, also generate hindrances in the integration process. And not to forget the resistance among the Swedish population to settle down in areas that have a dominant ethnic minority population, exacerbates the isolation factor. The discrimination in the housing market is an additional factor that worsens the situation even more. Since there are different levels of actors involved in the structures of providing housing, the discrimination factor is unavoidable.

13.2 Do administrative authorities handle integration issues in an efficient way?

Regarding the role of the administrative agencies, as already mentioned, the ongoing work concerning integrating issues in Sweden, will be changed from December 1 2010. The work done so far by the municipalities in introducing new arrivals to the system in Sweden will be transferred to the SPES. Although the SPES has played an important role prior to December 1 2010, their responsibilities will increase in the future. The municipalities will indeed have a coordinating role, but the majority of the working tasks will fall on the SPES. The specific steps that will be involved in the future introduction plan have been discussed previously in the thesis. This study has explored the directives given by the government to match with the stories of the respondents to showcase whether the authorities fulfill their purpose or not. Both sides have had a significant impact on the results. From the conducted interviews it can be concluded that the SPES, the municipality and the Swedish Migration Board are the three main agencies that play their own unique, and perhaps the biggest role, to assist the new arrivals along the path.

The administrative agencies support the immigrant women in numerous ways. For instance establishment talks have proved to be very efficient to form a point of departure. By doing so, it gives the newly arrival the opportunity to express their future plans. The second tool, and perhaps the most efficient one, to integrate immigrants in the labour market is to encourage them to take SFI and SAS courses and to start a vocational education that they are suggested, both, by the municipality and the SPES. All women in this study argued on similar grounds and believed that the best way to learn the language, as quickly as possible, is to take Swedish courses and form social-contacts through trainee jobs. The SPES plays a vital role in making this possible by providing a subsidized amount of 75% of the income. As far as the language courses are concerned, women find it useful to take courses in SFI and SAS, the problem arises when they are given the option to start relevant education. For those who have low skilled education it is, to some extent, more acceptable to start any vocational education, as they see this as an opportunity to find work in the future. However the complication rises when it comes to highly-educated immigrants.

Although the authorities in Sweden are developing methods to support new arrivals, the backlash is that authorities, handling immigrant issues, are, to some extent, ineffectual when it comes to supporting highly educated immigrants. The problem lays in the educational system in Sweden and the lack of validation of foreign degrees and previous working experience. This does not only affect the immigrant in a negative way, but leaves its mark on the society as well. It makes it costly for the society, as high numbers of immigrants, especially women, are stuck in low level study courses. In addition, the counselors in the SPES, in some cases, lack the capability to provide correct guiding to these people. In many cases immigrants are not given sufficient information on what they should study or what they should do in their future. Both of these factors lower the chances for immigrants to enter into the labour force at
a short period of time. Instead the immigrants are trapped in the extension courses, which prevent them from moving forward and thus delimiting the chances to join the labour force. This dilemma becomes even more challenging as it leads to isolation, which in turn gives rise to widened gaps and the lack of understanding between certain societal groups.

When it comes to the housing issue, the authorities indeed support immigrant to find a place to live. Unfortunately the places that immigrants are referred to live in paves the way for segregation, which the systems that are embedded in the society are to be held responsible for.

### 13.3 What can be done to improve the present situation?

The government has already initiated various measures to be adopted to improve the integrating situation in Sweden. For example, the government has set off a number of steps to progress in the field of integration policies. The biggest step taken in December 2010 was to transfer a number of duties from the municipalities to the SPES across Sweden. What remains to be observed is if this will make a difference or not. The incentive of doing so is to enable immigrants to join the labour market quicker. The SPES will in the future have a more powerful position in this matter. From the time that immigrants are granted residence permit, from that time a counselor who works for the SPES, will introduce the immigrant to join the introductory plan provided by the SPES, initiated by Swedish government.

As the SPES have an influential role on the individuals that come to Sweden as refugees, especially women, it is necessary that the fallacies that have become visible through this study are prevented in the future. In general terms, the following bullet points suggest some of the improvements that need to be adapted by the Swedish authorities and the individuals in society in order to smooth out the integration process in Sweden.

- Professionals working with immigrants must give the correct information to the new arrivals and to utilize previous working and educational experience.
- Newly arrivals must be given the chance to start SFI on different levels, depending on former education.
- Newly arrivals must be encouraged to take SFI and start relevant vocational education. It is also important to introduce them to different education options, so that they can make up their mind what they wish work with in the future.
- Discrimination, especially those working with immigrants in governmental related organs (those who support newly arrivals to become self-supporting), like the SPES and in the municipalities, in the housing market and in the labour force should under no circumstances be tolerated.
- Measures need to be taken to give immigrants the opportunity to complement already achieved degrees from their home countries.
14 Future research

This investigation has mainly been dedicated to present and analyse the work carried out by the Swedish government to integrate immigrant women into the Swedish society. This thesis brings up the aspects that facilitate the integration process for new arrivals in Sweden as well as the obstacles that they face. The thesis has also emphasized the actions that the Swedish government will take to improve the situation.

One of the most important initiatives have been to transfer immigrant-related services from the local municipalities to the SPES, with the aim to speed up the process of supporting immigrants into entering the labour market quicker. One plausible future study is to make a follow-up study of this investigation by evaluating the new plan that has been implemented and question the efficiency of it and what changes it has brought.

Were there enough measures taken by the government to integrate newly arrivals into the Swedish society?
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Appendix
Request letter written to the SPES offices
Till berörda chefer/handläggare, Arbetsförmedlinge
Hej,

Mitt namn är Minaz Sadikot och jag läser för tillfället statsvetenskap som huvudämne och nationalekonomi som biämne på handelshögskolan i Jönköping (JIBS). Jag är inne på min sista termin nu, vilket betyder att det enda som kvarstår är min D-uppsats.

Mitt ämne som jag har valt behandlar integration i Sverige och mitt uppsatsarbete fokuserar på invandrar- kvinnors situation, från asylsökande tills dess att de kommer in i arbetslivet. Den övergripande forskningsfrågan är ”Vilka aspekter underlättar för icke-svenska kvinnors (invandrar kvinnor) integrering i det svenska samhället?”

I undersökningen har jag valt att använda en kvalitativ forskningsmetod med ett bottom-up perspektiv. Bottom-up metoden innebär här att jag går ut och intervjuar personer som har egen erfarenhet av samhällsproblemet. Därifrån går undersökningen vidare utifrån de aspekter som varit viktigast för att dessa kvinnor skulle kunna få ett arbete. Allt material i arbetet behandlas konfidentiellt.


Eftersom jag valt att göra ett strategiskt urval, så vänder jag mig till Dig för att kunna få kontakt med invandrar kvinnor som kommit till Sverige som flyktingar (asyl sökande) och som idag har en fot i arbetsmarknaden. Därför är din hjälp viktig och jag är mycket tacksam om Du kan hjälpa mig med att komma i kontakt med kvinnor som kom till Sverige som flyktig och som idag har jobb. Kan du hjälpa mig med det?


Hoppas du vill medverka för att möjliggöra detta forskningsarbete och att vi kan höras av så snart som möjligt för att gå vidare.

Med vänliga hälsningar

Minaz Sadikot, pol. mag. student
The template of the questions asked in the interview

Forskningsfrågan: Vilka aspekter underlättar icke-svenska kvinnors (invandrar kvinnors) integration i det svenska samhället?

F0- Bakgrund, lite personlig relation (Det de pratar om är viktigast)

1. Hur upplevdes det när du kom till Sverige?
   1.2 Vilka var det du kom i kontakt med, utom din familj och släkt?
   1.3 Var det någon som du fick särskilt betydelsefullt stöd av? Isf vem/vad?

F1 – viktiga förutsättningar för integrationen och vägen till arbete

2. Vad upplever du var det viktigaste för att du idag har ett arbete?

F2- de/n allra viktigaste förutsättningen/händelserna som i praktiken faktiskt bidrog till jobb

3. Vad gör att du upplever detta som ett så betydelsefullt och viktigt stöd för dig?


F3- Baseras på hur frågor? Handlar om hur/vilka resurser som användes

5. Hur gick det till i praktiken, vill du berätta mer om det, hur gjorde ni? Vad var det som förde dig närmare/till ett arbete (Hur gick själva processen till?)

F4- Resultaten, sammanfattning av resultaten som är särskilt viktiga för ip. (Vad innebär detta idag, eller för din (intervjupersonens) framtid)?(Ex. "Du sa det med skolan, dessa personer etc. var viktigast", vilka lärdomar vill du särskilt dela med dig av här…hur borde det vara, hur borde invandrarkvinnor mötas…?)

6. Av erfarenheterna som du har, och här har berättat om. Vad värderar du idag allra mest när du ser tillbaka på din situation ifrån att du kom till Sverige som asyl sökandet tills idag?
Organisation model of the SPES

Model 1.1. An organisational model of the SPES, illustrated on the official webpage of SPES.
Quotations

Full quotations in English

Chapter 7

(Q 7:1)

"It was beautiful. Beautiful scenery and good weather. I arrived in October. I was shocked to see that people follow the laws here, which is very good. There is a big difference in culture. For example, the Swedes can talk about sex. There is nothing I am used to. People also kiss on the streets. After a while one gets used to the like that "

(Q 7:2)

“I was surprised that people are so cold. Life was very different here”

(Q 7:3)

"Everything was difficult at first. New language and new culture. I've been through war, and hope for a better life here. People and religion are different. But you must realize that there is a difference in order to blend in.

(Q 7:4)

It was very lonely. The language was tough. But now I like Sweden.

Chapter 8

(Q 8:1)

"You have to take care of your child, which makes it too late to start working. Children need time. I have the entire household responsibility, because my husband works. He has to commute which is very time consuming. I have to do the shopping, take care of the car, wash and clean”

Q (8:2)

"They have done a lot for my children and I would not move from here because my children like it here [...] my children have received top marks in school and I want them to have a bright future"

Q 8:3

"I have to be with my son in kindergarten when my husband works full time. He cannot tell the teachers what he wants”

Chapter 9

Q 9:1

You felt different and you felt differently treated when you came here”

Q 9:2
"When I came to Sweden in the beginning, I wanted to invite Swedes in order to get to know them and learn the language. But unfortunately, no one invited us back. This was something common in my country (that you go and visit each other), but here it was different".

Q 9:3

"I was surprised that people were so cold. Nobody wanted to listen. On the street, when I went over and spoke to them in English (when I said "excuse me"), they became afraid and did not want to answer"

Q 9:4

"When I applied for a job at a university, I was questioned if I could speak fluent Swedish. I said that I only spoke English and was able to teach in English. But I did not get the job because they felt that I was not sufficiently skilled in the language and needed to learn more. In addition, I needed a recommendation letter written by Swedes to get the job"

Q 9:5

"In the beginning I felt as if Swedes did not want anything to do with immigrants. I felt that my manager did not want to talk to me. It felt really hard at first to practice where your boss does not want to meet you"

Q 9:6

"When I wanted to open my own shop, I was stopped by the municipality to purchase a suitable hall. It felt as if the municipality came up with reasons of not letting me buy it. Afterwards, I could read a document, where it said that I was not capable of starting my own business. In a conversation between two employees (in the document), it was written that my husband and I were bluffing and that we had to stay in Sweden for a long time to start up our own business. I think the reason was that the hall was located in a Swedish area"

Chapter 10

Q 10:1

"For me, the language is the key and the treasure to be able to be part of the society."

Q 10:2

"When I sat in the bus I wanted to know what everyone were talking about. What if they said mean things about me"

Q 10:3

"It is important to speak the language of the country that you live in to be able to make contact with people. It gives no good impression if you speak English. Then people will think that you just arrived in Sweden or that you are ignorant. It is difficult at first, but you have to give it time".
"To learn Swedish is important, it is not enough to know English [...] It is important to learn the (Swedish) language, but it does not mean that you have to hang out with Swedes. In the beginning when I came to Sweden, I wanted to invite Swedes to get to know them and learn the language. But unfortunately, no one invited us back. This was something normal in my country (that you go and visit each other), but here it was different".

Q 10:5

You got to know people at school and your neighbors who I thought were very nice"

Q 10:6

"It's good that you get money if you study SFI as quickly as possible, it makes you motivated"

Q 10:7

"I had to sign up for SFI by myself"

Q 10:8

"The culture, people and the religion is different. One must realize that there is a distinction (between the two people) to be able to blend in"

Q 10:9

"Having work is important! All my life I have worked. In my country I worked for 25 years. I want a job!"

Q 10:10

"(I) Do not want to live on welfare! You have to decide to move forward"

Q 10:11

"You have to find a job, not just sit at home and go on welfare. One should work and pay taxes. One should not just sit at home".

Q 10:12

The language was difficult at first, but the willpower exists to get better and better. I fight for my family and wish in the future to have a permanent job. A tip for newly arrivals is to keep on struggling, and set up goals".

Q 10:13

"In Sweden, it is peace and freedom, which allows one to focus [...] I'm ambitious, but there's nothing that drives me forward, I cannot compete with myself. All teachers here say that all are equal, which I think is strange. In my country one had to compete in school and we were used to that students were on different levels. I live in a village outside Stockholm, so it is not easy to get in touch with people. One must take the initiatives to introduce yourself, show yourself, to get a job".

Q 10:14
"I asked a friend who was sitting in the bus if she could help me to get a job. She talked to her manager and on the following day I was called for an interview. After one week I got the job”!

Chapter 11

Q 11:1

"I got support from the municipality to find housing, since I came with my children alone to Sweden. After 20 days the children started school and I did not want to move because the children had begun to feel at home”.

Q 11:2

"We decided to move to Stockholm, because there were more immigrants here, especially from my home country. Where we lived before there lived no people from my country. I was feeling really bad at that time. Everything was new and I suffered from psychological problems at the same time as we were living on very low income. One cannot believe we made it (my son and I) to live on merely 4000kr per month. At that time I had no support from my husband because he had gone away from me and worked as a dishwasher”.

Q11:3

"I live in a village therefore it is not so easy to contact someone. It is better to live in a larger city, where you can create contacts with more people”

Q 11:4

“"We received a notice from the Swedish Board of Migration that we could move (from Stockholm), but we cannot do that. They say we can get housing, but they cannot provide us with a job. We chose not to move since the kids play football and enjoy school with their friends. It feels right to live in Stockholm and I do not want to move up to Kiruna. I also have my sister and other people who I know from my country that live here”.

Chapter 12

Q 12:1

"After one week in Sweden, I came into contact with a man named Emir who worked for the municipality. He was my counselor for one year. I was sent to learn Swedish. He explained what it was like to live in Sweden and asked me what I could see myself working with in the future. I told him I worked as a teacher in my country, but he explained to me that I could not work as a teacher, because it would require training and it would take time to complete it in Sweden. After a year I got a new counselor named Frida and then Catherine. I was also in contact with another counselor in the municipality named Martin who was in charge of training places in the induction unit. Martin helped me to find a restaurant training course. After six months, the SPES was also involves where a man named Harry supported me. All four counselors worked with me and were in contact with each other. Harry taught me how to write a cover letter and gave us ideas on how to look for jobs. Even Martin and another girl named Yasmin who worked in the
introductory unit taught us how to write CVs and informed us about where to work.

I have had a number of placements. I started by taking a course called Child care for six months and then I took a course in the restaurant branch. Martin told me to take the course because we owned a restaurant in my country and because I had experience in that field. When I got my first job, the SPES paid 75% of my salary. I got my first job with the help of the municipality. My current boss was looking for a cook and the municipality helped to match so I got the job. I have learned a lot during my internship. The language has been the most important and that I dare to talk! I'm not as scared as I was in the beginning."

Q 12:2

“After having lived in Sweden for five months and two weeks I found a job on my own as a lecturer. I sent the resume and cover letter myself through the Internet. It is not difficult to do it yourself. The municipality helped me to receive education in the language. I was allowed to start at the D-level, since I could speak English. I passed the SFI in six months [...] neither the municipality nor the SPES helped me with SFI. I went there myself. I think that the SPES is not used to supporting well-educated people. I suggested and gave them ideas in what ways they could assist me. They are able to support those who are less educated, and therefore they could not help me. At the moment I'm unemployed, but I have scheduled meetings with the SPES once a month”.

Q 12:3

"When I came to Sweden, I came in contact with a counselor at the Swedish Board of Migration, but I did not think he was very nice. It felt as if he treated me unfairly. At that time, I needed a bigger apartment and I was pregnant, but he did not help me out. I saw many others who were supported, but he did not help me.

After some time I got another counselor whose name was Shaufiq, who was really nice. I was severely depressed and Shufiq made sure to take care of my child. At that time my husband was not with me and I was alone. I also came in contact with Ann and Peter, who worked in the social services. These two people have influenced my life and contributed to the person I am today. At that time, we lived on 4000kr per month that we received from the Swedish Board of Migration. After receiving the residence permit, we lived in Lindesberg Municipality in Örebro, but after some time, we moved to Stockholm

It was hard to find an apartment here, but after a lot of difficulties we got a house to live in for a year that we were allowed to borrow from a man. You need to have a house to be registered at the municipality. Only after that we came in contact with some counselors at the municipality. The municipality helped out financially and encouraged me to study. A woman at induction unit looked at my resume and asked me what I wanted to do. She helped to develop my ideas, which made me realise what I wanted to do in life. I said I wanted to open up start my own business. Only after that I was sent to the SFF (Swedish for entrepreneurs). During the course, we meet people who came to us and told us how they started their own businesses".
The woman at induction unit also helped me to write my first CV. I thought it was important to get familiar with the (Swedish) system. I started to talk to people who were in the same situation as me and I knew I had to learn the language to be able to move on [...] I did not want to live on social allowance. Both my husband and I had worked previously, he as a dish washer and me as a waitress. I had also studied business administration in my country, which became very useful. [...] I decided that I wanted to open up my own grocery store. My husband and I started looking on the internet to find a hall that was purchasable. It was difficult because we often experienced discrimination, but in the end we got a hall and opened our own shop”.

Q 12:4

"When we arrived in Sweden, we came in contact with an officer at the National Board of Migration. He gave us an introduction and asked me and my daughter why we came here and asked about the family. At that time we received money from the National Board of Migration. After the residence permit we received financial support from the municipality and support from a counselor. The counselor suggested that I should start at SFI and after I had begun SFI, I started to take a childcare course. Since I had a teacher-degree, I wanted to do something in that field. I had to get a degree. During my childcare course I was sent for training in a nursery school. The staff seemed to like me and I got a full time job schedule. But I still don’t have a permanent position. It was only the staff who liked me, the manager has not spoken to me. One thing that I find strange is that my name is not included in the work schedule and I am referred to as a 'temp'. Since I got this job, the SPES does not help me anymore. I have a family, school and the job to think about during the day. I study SAS in the evenings three days a week. I’m struggling and hoping to get a degree in childcare and a permanent job in the future ”.

Q 12:5

"From the National Board of Migration I received assistance from a woman named Marie-Louise. Marie-Louise helped me to find somewhere to live, after I had got my residence permit. After twenty days my children started school and after four months, they started in a regular school. After that I came in contact with a woman in the induction unit. The municipality paid me 7800kr per month with two children. I got my first job through my friend, who lived next door to me. I came in contact with the chief and after my first interview I received a job at a sandwich factory. I was glad I did not take social allowance. I did not want to live on welfare. The municipality suggested that I should start SFI. I did that for two months, but I could not continue because I was working almost 11-12 hours a day. In my country I studied in high school and one year at university. After the factory went bankrupt, I got my second job, in the elderly care, that I found myself. Ever since then I have not had any contact with the SPES. Today I am hourly paid, but I need a degree to get a permanent job”.
Full quotations in Swedish

Chapter 7

Q 7:1


(Respondent 2).

Q 7.2

“Jag var förvånad över att folk är så kalla. Livet var mycket annorlunda här.”

(Respondent 3).

Q 7:3


(Respondent 4).

Q 7:4

Det var mycket ensamhet. Språket var jobbigt. Men jag tycker om Sverige nu.

(Respondent 5).

Chapter 8

Q 8:1

“Man måste ta hand om sitt barn, och det gör att det blir för sent att börja jobba. Barn behöver tid. Jag har allt ansvar för huset, eftersom min man jobbar. Han måste pendla och resan tar tid. Jag måste handla, ta hand om bilen, tvätta och städa”

(Respondent 2).

Q 8:2

“De har gjort mycket för mina barn och jag vill inte flytta härifrån eftersom min barn trivs här[...]mina barn har fått högsta betyg i skolan och jag vill att dom ska ha en bra framtid”

(Respondent 5).

Q 8:3

“Jag måste vara med min son på dagits när min man jobbar heltid. Han kan inte berätta för fröknarna vad han vill”

(Respondent 2).
Chapter 9

Q 9:1

“Man kände sig annorlunda och annorlunda behandlad när man kom hit”

(Respondent 3).

Q 9:2

“När jag kom till Sverige i början, ville jag bjuda hem svenskar för att lära känna dem och lärar mig språket. Men tyvärr var det ingen som hjöd oss tillbaka. Detta var något som är vanligt i mitt land (att man går och besöker varandra), men här var det annorlunda”

(Respondent 2).

Q 9:3

“Jag var förvånad över att människor var så kalla. Ingen ville lyssna. På gatan, när jag gick fram och talade med dem på engelska (när jag sa ”excuse me”), blev de rädda och ville inte svara”

(Respondent 3).

Q 9:4


(Respondent 2).

Q 9:5

“I början kändes det som om svenskar inte vill ha med invandrare att göra. Jag upplevde att min chef inte ville prata med mig. Kändes väldigt svårt i början att praktisera där ens chef inte vill träffa en”

(Respondent 1).

Q 9:6

“När jag ville öppna min egna butik, blev jag hindrad av kommunen att få köpa lokalen. Det kändes som om kommunen hittade på anledningar till att jag inte skulle kunna få köpa den. I efterhand kunde jag läsa ett dokument där det stod att jag inte var kapabel till att öppna eget. I en konversation mellan två tjänstemän (i dokumentet) stod det att min man och jag bluffade och att vi var tvungna att bo i Sverige under en längre period för att kunna öppna eget. Jag tror att anledning var att lokalen låg i ett svenskt område”
Chapter 10

Q 10:1
"För mig är språket nyckeln och skatten till att kunna vara delaktig i samhället"

(Respondent 2).

Q 10:2
"När jag satt i bussen ville jag veta vad alla pratade om. Tänk om de sa elaka saker om mig!"

(Respondent 2).

Q 10:3
"Det är viktigt att kunna språket i det land man lever i för att kunna få kontakt med folk. Det ger inget bra intryck om man talar engelska. Då tror folk att man precis kommit till Sverige eller är okunnig. Det är svårt i början, men man måste ge det tid"

(Respondent 3).

Q 10:4
"Att lära sig svenska är viktigt, det räcker inte bara engelska [...] Det är viktigt att lära sig språket, men det behöver inte betyda att man måste umgås med svenskar. När jag kom till Sverige i början, ville jag bjuda hem svenskar för att lära känna dem och lärar mig språket. Men tyvärr var det ingen som bjöd oss tillbaka. Detta var något som är vanligt i mitt land (att man går och besöker varandra), men här var det annorlunda"

(Respondent 2).

Q 10:5
"Man lärde känna folk i skolan och ens grannar som jag tyckte var väldigt trevliga"

(Respondent 3).

Q 10:6
"Det är bra att man får pengar om man läser SFI så fort som möjligt, det gör att man känner sig motiverad"

(Respondent 3).

Q 10:7
"Jag fick själv anmäla mig till SFI"

(Respondent 3).

Q 10:8
“Kulturen, människorna och religionen är annorlunda. Man måste inse att det är skillnad för att kunna smälta in”

(Respondent 4).

Q 10:9

"Jobb är viktigt, i hela mitt liv har jag jobbat i mitt hemland (i 25 år). Jag vill ha ett jobb!"

(Respondent 1).

Q 10:10

"Vill inte ta socialbidrag! Man måste bestämma sig för att gå framåt"

(Respondent 3).

Q 10:11

"Man måste hitta ett jobb, inte bara sitta hemma och gå på bidrag. Man ska jobba och betala skatt. Man ska inte bara sitta hemma"

(Respondent 5).

Q 10:12

"Språket var svårt i början, men viljan finns att bli bättre och bättre. Jag kämpar vidare för min familj och vill i framtiden ha en fast tjänst. Ett tips till nyanlända är att kämpa vidare, och sätta upp mål"

(Respondent 4).

Q 10:13

"I Sverige är det fred och frihet, som gör att man kan fokusera [...]. Jag är ambitiös, men det är inget som driver mig fram, jag kan inte konkurrera med mig själv. Alla lärare här säger att alla är på samma nivå, vilket jag tycker är konstigt. I mitt hemland fick man tävla i skolan och vi var vana vid att elever var på olika nivåer. Jag bor i en by utanför Stockholm, där för är det inte lätt att få kontakt med folk. Man måste ta egna initiativ, introducera sig själv, visa sig, för att kunna få ett jobb"

(Respondent 2).

Q 10:14

"Jag frågade en kompis som satt i bussen om hon kunde hjälpa mig med att få ett jobb. Hon pratade med chefen och dagen efter blev jag kallad till intervju. Efter en vecka fick jag jobbet!"

(Respondent 5).

Chapter 11

Q 11:1
"Jag fick hjälp av kommunen att hitta bostad, eftersom jag kom med mina barn ensam till Sverige. Efter 20 dagar började barnen i skolan och jag tyckte inte att jag ville flytta eftersom barnen hade börjat trivas"

(Respondent 5).

Q 11:2

"Vi bestämde oss för att flytta till Stockholm, eftersom det fanns mera invandrare här, speciellt från mitt hemland. Där vi bodde tidigare fanns inga landsmänniskor. Jag mådde jätte dåligt på den tiden. Allt var nytt och jag led av psykologiska problem samtidigt som vi levde på väldigt låg inkomst. Man kan inte fatta att vi klarade oss (min son och jag) att leva på endast 4000kr i månaden. På den tiden hade jag inte heller stöd från min man, eftersom han hade åkt bort från mig och jobbade som diskare"

(Respondent 3).

Q 11:3

"Jag bor i en by därför är det inte så lätt att kontakta någon. Det är bättre att bo i en större stad, där man kan skapa flera kontakter"

(Respondent 2).

Q 11:4

Vi fick förslag av migrationsverket att vi kunde flytta, men vi kan inte göra det. De säger att vi kan få bostad, men de kan inte erbjuda jobb. Vi valde att inte inte flytta eftersom barnen spelar fotboll och trivs i skolan med deras vänner. Det känns rätt att bo i Stockholm, jag vill inte flytta upp till Kiruna. Jag har även min syster och andra människor som jag känner som bor här"

(Respondent 4).

Chapter 12

Q 12:1


Jag var även i kontakt med en annan handläggare i kommunen som hette Martin som hade hand om praktik platser inom introduktionsenheten. Martin hjälpte mig att hitta en restaurang utbildning. Efter sex månader blev även arbetsförmedlingen inblandad. Där fick jag stöd av en man som hette Harry. Alla fyra handläggare samarbetade och var i kontakt med varandra. Harry lärde mig att skriva personligt brev och gav oss idéer på hur man söker jobb. Även Martin
och en annan tjej som hette Yasmin som jobbade inom introduktionsenheten lärde oss hur vi skriver CV och informerade oss om var man kan jobba.


När jag fick mitt första jobb betalade Arbetsförmedlingen 75% av min lön. Jag fick mitt första jobb med hjälp av kommunen. Min nuvarande chef letade efter en kokerska och kommunen hjälpte till att matcha så jag fick jobbet. Jag har lärt mig mycket under min praktik. Språket har varit det viktigaste och att jag vågar prata! Jag är inte lika rädd, som jag var i början.”

(Respondent 1).

Q 12:2


(Respondent 2).

Q 12:3


för företagare). Inom utbildningen fick vi träffa personer som kom och berättade för oss hur de startade egna företag.


(Respondent 3).

Q 12:4


(Respondent 4).

Q 12:5


gick i konkurs så skaffade jag mitt andra jobb, inom äldreomsorgen, själv. Efter det har jag inte haft någon som helst kontakt med Arbetsförmedlingen. Idag är jag timanställd, men jag behöver utbildning för att kunna få fast jobb”.

(Respondent 5).