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DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE
CENTRE FOR EUROPEAN STUDIES (CES)

"PROMOTING OUR EUROPEAN WAY OF LIFE."

A case of newly arrived refugees participation in the establishment program in the municipality of Mark – Sweden.

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Master's thesis:	15 credits
program:	Executive Master's program in European Studies
Level:	Second Cycle
Semester year:	Spring 2021
Supervisor:	Dr. Alexandra Bousiou

Abstract

This thesis presents an interpretation of the EU's utilisation of norms through the establishment program for regular immigrants. The focus and interest are on newly arrived quota refugees in the Swedish municipality of Mark. Through the paradigm of norm diffusion, one can understand European norms and how they are used to attain set goals. Furthermore, the concept of spillover is also helpful in comprehending the EU's usage of norms as an integrative mechanism or tool. This study underlines the importance of understanding the purpose and design of specific norms and their diffusion patterns.

One way to comprehend how effective the EU is in using its policies to reflect and promote a European way of life is by looking at the establishment program for newly arrived quota refugees. This thesis has taken a closer look at the collaboration between the EU and its member state – Sweden, at a municipal level. The latter has used legislation to facilitate involvement and engagement in the norm diffusion process with the establishment program as its channel. Such legislations have proven to be effective in diffusing European norms to designated target groups. Through effective promulgation, the EU and MS work together to ensure the diffusion of European norms.

On the other hand, the available choices to newly arrived quota refugees other than participating in the program are minimal. The effect of the establishment program as a channel for diffusing European norms and values portrays the efficiency of the EU as a norm entrepreneur. The analysis of the data collected with the help of qualitative research design suggests the need for better social communication. Such a platform will pave the way for all affected by the norm diffusion processes to feel more actively included in the program. Also, the data indicates that for the newly arrived and municipality, the process of norm diffusion can become a win-win scenario. It will require, among other things, for participants, especially norm-takers, to perceive their involvement as being voluntary rather than compulsory.

Keywords: Establishment program, newly arrived quota refugees, norms and values, diffusion, European Union (EU), policy, participation, communication, municipality, goal, legislation, member states (MS), obligation, engagement, responsibility.

Word count: 17092

Acknowledgement

I am most grateful to my Lord for His bountiful mercies and grace, without which this thesis would not have been possible. I am profoundly honoured to have you by my side Joan and overwhelmingly grateful for your love, encouragement, and comfort. Your undivided attention inspires excellence and determination. You and the kids will forever remain my top priority. To Dr. Alexandra Bousiou, I thank you for your support and supervision, especially when it was rough. You made me focus on my strengths. Your remarks unearthed reflections that have proven to be very educational. Thanks to all the staff at EMAES cohort 2019 and my fellow students, whose every comment and insight helped me attain this goal. It has been outstanding, CHEERS!

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1 Introduction

The European Union (EU), with close to 450 million inhabitants today, comprises 27 active Member States (MS). For the EU to better serve its inhabitants as a multi-national institution, it is designed to communicate policies effectively, even at the municipal level. For this communication to be effective, a collaboration between the EU's central organs (such as the Commission) and MS relies in part on the proper formulation of policies. These policies, which often reflect MS interest, are later propagated through legislation within MS or as recommendations. Municipalities within MS, therefore, represent a vital channel through which the EU's policies in theory and practice meet the masses (Communication department of the European Commission, 2019). In effect, looking at the Lisbon Treaty, which came into effect in December 2009, articles 79 and 80 dwelled on the EU's immigration policy. The policy was designed to foster regular immigration backed by solidarity and integration efforts from MS while working to curb irregular immigration (European Parliament, 2019). However, present-day migration and defence circumstances in and outside the EU do put to the test the resilience of past and present approaches adopted by the EU as an institution and MS divergent policies in these areas. Mindful of the fact that policy implementation at the municipal level requires commitment, the process of establishing newly arrived quota refugees into their local municipalities may stand to be influenced. Such influence could be due to the efforts that have been singled out as facilitators for integration and assimilation into the new community. Among other measures, one can mention vocational training, job placements, and diverse educational inputs, which according to the Swedish public employment service website, would lay the foundation for integration and establishment for newly arrived quota refugees among other target groups (Swedish Public Employment Service, 2019).

As a member state of the EU and as a sovereign nation, Sweden is a partner of the United Nations Organisation (UN). The EU considers itself as a devoted partner of the UN, sharing in its goal to give the world improved security and better opportunities both now and in the future (Directorate-General for Communication - European Commission, 2015). In compliance with UN General Assembly Resolution 319, the Kingdom of Sweden actively participates in the refugee resettlement effort acting as a third country destination for many persons hailing from diverse continents (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2011). From one municipality to another, stories are recounted about coordinated reception of newly arrived

quota refugees and other categories of new arrivals and immigrants. These experiences associated with reception and how to proceed with their establishment in the new community make for exciting debates in various circles. Sweden's collaboration with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is deemed necessary in many ways, primarily humanitarian. As such, Sweden has a national program called the establishment program. The primary purpose of the establishment program is to facilitate and accelerate the integration and assimilation of certain newly arrived refugees to the country. This effort benefits from the support of legislation that stipulates that those who are to participate in the establishment program ought to be between the ages of 20 and less than 65 (Sveriges Riksdag, 2010).

However, to ensure that this coordinated initiative is spread evenly across the kingdom, those newly arrived quota refugees who fulfil the criteria according to the law on the establishment program are successively distributed across Swedens' 290 municipalities (Statistics Sweden, 2021). The Swedish parliament legislation supports this action as it compels its 290 municipalities to actively accommodate the newly arrived individuals practically (Sveriges Riksdag, 2016). Municipalities are bound to have as preconditions the logistic and administrative capacities necessary to orchestrate the establishment of newly arrived immigrants such as quota refugees. The reason for such preconditions is the laws on the establishment of specific newly arrived individuals and the law on the reception of newly arrived immigrants. It is worthy to note that many different categories of immigrants do qualify to participate in the establishment program. The program is open to individuals who arrived in Sweden through personal means and applied for a residence permit on Swedish soil. For this study, the focus is on the group that Sweden has accorded refugee status before being transferred to Sweden as a possible final resettlement destination. The resettlement process in Sweden as a third country for some immigrant categories like newly arrived quota refugees is the establishment program. The program comprises a series of efforts designated to facilitate introduction into the society for immigrants. Immigrants are meant to have arrived in the country both through regular and irregular means but must have obtained a certain residence permit. Quota refugees constitute an integral part of those who fulfil the criteria to participate in the establishment program, enabling its participants to identify with their new community and enrich their community through work and becoming self-reliant (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2011).

The perception of the program's level of success may differ depending on whose perspective one tends to pay attention to. Political, academic, and apolitical opinions on the relevance, structure and expected output of the establishment program are recurrent in diverse societal debates. Such perceptions reflect in the views expressed by Meijerborg and Hjalmarsson (2016), who singled out the use of a language as a pivotal facilitator for an effective establishment. The time allowed for the Swedish establishment program usually is twenty-four months. However, opinions regarding the effectiveness of the establishment program partly because of its duration are varied. Yet, consideration of newly arrived perceptions of issues such as work based on their cultural context are vital when reflected in the design and structure of the program. The benefits of such a program tend to be more visible, according to Colic-Peisker and Tilbury (2003), who carried out a study on resettlement in Australia. Suppose the goal of the program is for the newly arrived quota refugee to actively participate in the designated activities, then as these authors suggest, the basis for collaboration needs to be such that it offers the newly arrived quota refugee some comprehensive influence over their individual participation in the program. Such influence will imply that newly arrived quota refugees may minimise the possibilities of being passed on from one instance to the next in the guise of participation in the program.

The small Swedish municipality of Mark situated in Västra Göteland is actively involved in the establishment program and the reception of newly arrived quota refugees. As such, this municipality, like all others in Sweden, works to implement the central government's establishment program, which is in accordance with the law. By doing this, the municipality of Mark can be said to actively participate in the propagation of EU norms and values. The propagation of EU norms and values is captured by the adage used by the EU Migration and Home Affairs department that states "promoting our European way of life" (Margaritis Schinas Vice-President for Promoting our European Way of Life, n.d.). The municipality of Mark has a population of around thirty-five thousand inhabitants, according to Statistics Sweden (2021). The allocation of refugees to the various municipalities is the responsibility of the Swedish Migration Agency in collaboration with the counties and municipalities, all following the law. The decentralisation of the process of reception and establishment of newly arrived quota refugees means that each municipality can determine the structure of its administration of the establishment program within the confines of the law. For a couple of years before 2020, the municipality of Mark was part of a coordinated effort with neighbouring municipalities aimed

at receiving newly arrived immigrants and administering their establishment in collaboration with other authorities. While this joint effort was rewarding in terms of sharing experiences in welcoming and assisting newly arrived quota refugees, municipalities were not bound to receive these individuals. However, due to the high influx of immigrants into Europe in conjunction with the 2015 migrant crisis caused partly by the Syrian war and the Arab spring, all municipalities were required by law to accord designated newly arrived immigrants (refugees included) with resources necessary to live within their municipality and participate in the establishment program (Sveriges Riksdag, 2016). The laws that compel Swedish municipalities to actively participate in the reception and establishment of newly arrived quota refugees could effectively pave the way for the propagation of the European way of life to the newly arrived quota refugees. Nevertheless, according to Colic-Peisker and Tilbury (2003,p 79), the newly arrived quota refugee could adopt a self-perception contrary to the expected outcome of the establishment program.

1.1 Aim

The research problem that this study has identified is based on the premise that the establishment program designed for newly arrived quota refugees in the municipality of Mark mainly reflects EU norms that are designed to foster and promote a European way of life. According to the theory of norm diffusion (which is discussed more below), such norms are specifically designed to attain set goals. As such the establishment program does not seem to accord newly arrived quota refugees further benefits beyond the provision of basic humanitarian necessities. In order to arrive at a mutually beneficial solution for newly arrived quota refugees and the municipality, it requires a study into how to carry out an inclusive establishment program. Norm diffusion theory and the concept of spillover provide an appropriate platform to gain a theoretical understanding of newly arrived quota refugees establishment efforts coordinated by the municipality of Mark and how it reflects EU norms at grassroots levels. According to Checkel (1999, p.84), norm diffusion represents a constructivist comprehension that involves norm agents/actors and norm-takers (quota refugees) in the process of norm propagation. Understanding norm diffusion within a given context (case) and their impact on the outcome of the establishment program for newly arrived quota refugees may shed more light on the identified problem.

This study aims to determine whether the establishment program for newly arrived quota refugees as executed by the municipality of Mark functions as a channel through which the EU's perception of life is reflected and promoted. Furthermore, the study aims to identify avenues for an inclusive establishment program that yields benefits for all involved.

Hence, the research question; how have municipalities like Mark adapted their newly arrived quota immigrants' establishment efforts to reflect and promote the European way of life?

2. Theory and previous research

2. 1. Previous research.

Academic writings on newly arrived quota refugees and their establishment processes in diverse communities across the EU are available. While these researches often point to the necessity to update as well as augment efforts aimed at facilitating the reception and introduction of new arrivals into their new communities, the EU and its MS seem to be far from matching rhetoric with pragmatism. This paradoxical reality spurs this research interest. Niemann and Speyer (2018) maintain that there exist dysfunctionalities between the EU and MS in the execution of commonly agreed measures relating to the handling of the inflow of immigrants into the EU in general. What this may imply in the light of the aim of this study is that, at local levels, EU norms may not be reflected and promoted such that the desired effects are attained as projected by the EU. Another perspective that highlights this research interest and is represented in this previous research review section is reflected in the mission letter from EU Commission President – Ursula von der Leyen (2019) addressed to Vice-President Margaritis Schinas, who presently heads the Migration and Home Affairs arm of the EU. In this letter, Ms Von der Leyen maintains that "Europe needs an economy and a labour market that have the people with the right skills to ensure that we preserve our European way of life and our competitiveness." In other words, by promoting the European way of life, the EU will be working consciously not only to ensure its survival but also proactively to assimilate through its well-designed integration policies, persons such as newly arrived quota refugees who are being received and established within the EU's geopolitical sphere. The establishment program, even at the municipal level, tentatively provides the EU with the means to foster norms such as solidarity through effective integration, shared responsibility through the acquisition of labour skills and education, and promotion of fairness and equality through dialogue and collaboration.

Though the review of literature touches on the EU as a normative actor, the focus dwells on writings that relate to how at local levels, municipalities such as Mark identify and incorporate the vision of promoting a European way of life in their mandatory establishment program per the Establishment Act (2010: 197). In other words, looking at the process of establishment of newly arrived quota refugees in light of the theory of norm diffusion and how

the EU utilises this diffusion mechanism as a tool to attain (and maintain) collective consciousness through local authorities. Without a doubt, there are multilevel goals for propagating norms that portray the EU as a leader of liberal order, such as working against insecurity and promoting trade and control immigration (Lucarelli 2018). This literature review seeks and deliberates on how the EU orchestrates its efforts towards promoting its normative vision through its immigration commitments and policies at a local level and how this adage is at risk of being associated with present-day right-wing ideologies as perceived by Cho (2020).

Authors Dandashly and Gergana (2019), agree that the EU may have worthwhile goals generally speaking. Nonetheless, they maintain that the intended effects of working to guarantee serenity, collective efforts, and safety for EU citizens, according to some, comes at a cost, which goes against the very rhetoric of a normative power that fosters democracy and cooperation. This may imply the need for the EU to step back and reevaluate its methods of attaining set goals. Therefore, the literature review will be done with the help of subtitles, which narrow focus on areas identified as necessary to the subject of interest for this study.

2.1.1 Norm diffusion in EU integration policy towards immigration.

Without a doubt, the EU seeks to attain some level of coherency with its policies in efforts to facilitate the mechanism set in place to manage immigration. According to Gebhard (2017), this coherency focuses on skillfully combining the diverse sections of the EU, which will result in an augmentation of purposed convergence in (both EU and MS) actions while also allowing for "procedural efficiency." Those familiar with the workings of the EU may tend to say this assertion fits the portrait that the EU seeks to uphold – that is, one of an integrated union wielding a common goal. However, the EU's efforts to maintain a level of "procedural efficiency" through compromise solutions, as observed through numerous treaties and their amendments, may hint at the idea that there are hitches in the attainment of coherency.

Andrew Moravcsik (1993) perceived the EU's compromise solutions to maintain its coherency as "a series of celebrated intergovernmental bargains." This view lends a helping hand in understanding EU norms and how these are infused and later diffused through policy formation and application. In other words, one may deduce that the final policy of the EU on immigration and how it might be implemented within its borders reflect the outcome of a series

of protracted negotiations aimed at converging at a conclusion that MS can relate their national positions on immigration to some degree. Nevertheless, this compromise solution implies that the EU has an agreed policy. Hence norms that MS agree are worth diffusing into their individually modelled establishment programs, policies, or legislation in various degrees, as in the case of Sweden with the Establishment Act (2016: 38).

According to Slobodchikoff (2010), norm diffusion is an integral aspect of the functioning of the EU, as can be observed through its set standards for the accession of new members based on the Copenhagen Criteria of 1993 (European Commission, 2016). However, it is interesting to note that as a member of the EU, MS or aspirants must adhere to European norms and standards commonly perceived as the basis for security, economic stability, and respect for human rights. While these criteria apply to aspiring MS, one can also assume that these criteria are further represented in the policy design to manage immigration and, more specifically, that of newly arrived quota refugees and their establishment within the EU and its MS at local levels. As a result of this assertion, one may wonder how the establishment of newly arrived quota refugees pragmatically reflects and fosters these standards and hence European norms and way of life.

2.1.2 Promoting EU norms through a structured establishment program.

Existing literature and opinions regarding establishment efforts and whether these are genuine or just another facet of Europeanization are aplenty. While this debate may be far from over, looking at how the EU, in collaboration with its MS, has structured the establishment of newly arrived quota immigrants, one can see that it reflects more on EU norms than on European norms. Flockhart (2010) mentions that, while Europeanization is seemingly ambiguous to define as a concept as well as being operationalised, EU-ization, on the other hand, focuses on politicisation of norms by the EU and its MS. In other words, the EU and MS could be seen as norm entrepreneurs and promoters (agents), according to Erol (2006). However, EU-ization, some may say, is reflected in the Copenhagen Criteria, which in a sense epitomises Europe's self-reflection of its history and a raison d'etre of the EU, which is to act as a regulatory agency. These criteria, as elaborated upon by Slobodchikoff (2010, p. 2), are the "most effective ways in which integration could bring about peace and stability." Immigration policies across MS,

therefore, reflect such norms that are aimed at preventing disintegration but rather enhancing integration and hence promoting European norms of "freedom of movement, uncorrupt governments, a single market, and strong human rights, states become more democratic, which in turn leads to peace and stability." These traits speak of having a common identity based on shared norms to facilitate cooperation and what better way to propagate this than through the establishment program for persons for whom such norms might not yet be evident.

In the view of Flockhart (2010), EU norms and their propagation can be viewed from historical sociology as well as a social constructivist perspective. This author, however, finds that these two perspectives complement one another. The first speaks of creating a narrative based on past experiences. At the same time, the second dwells on how these are relevant in shaping our understanding and approach to present and future circumstances and consequently the ongoing formation of an identity. What may be interesting to focus on based on this author's reflections is the outcome of a one-sided structuring of the establishment program. In other words, one may wonder how the EU and MS have learned to incorporate immigrants and their history and identity into this ongoing formation of the EU identity without jeopardising the attainment of goals such as stipulated in the Copenhagen Criteria. The establishment program may as such tend to be perceived as being a tool for the EU-ization of newly arrived quota refugees even at municipal levels.

2.1.3 "Our way of life" – a multifaceted tool for the EU.

From its conception and throughout its continuous existence, the EU's activities in the area of immigration have been a significant point of reference in international discourses with regards to issues relating to the regularised movement of people and their resettlement as well as establishment based on humanitarianism (Cuttitta, 2017). In many ways and in conjunction with the above-mentioned Copenhagen Criteria, this focus on humanitarianism has long been and still is a goal for the Union. An effect of working to attain this goal is that the EU should be perceived as a viable liberal world leader (European Commission, 2016). The EU has embarked not only on efforts to diffuse its norms within its borders but also on its external relations through its policy formulations and implementation. According to Lindstrom (2005, p. 593), through EU policies on emigration management, one can identify its norms and diffusion

patterns. Through aid initiatives, this author maintains that the EU tends to "*demand*" that its collaborators at the receiving end abide by its set standards or norms, which enhance fair trade, structured or regulated immigration, security, democracy, and respect of human rights. Non-compliance by collaborators with less to offer and more to gain by working with the EU may imply lesser "trade, aid, investment or diplomatic relations … that country becomes poorer and/or more troubled as a result of the EU's sanctioned behaviour". In light of the interest of this study, what seems evident from looking at the assertions that Lindstrom (2005) puts forward is that the content, structure, and goal of programs such as the establishment program for newly arrived quota immigrants are set in motion long before new arrivals physically arrive at their new local municipalities such as Mark. Through its collaboration with source countries (for immigrants), the EU's policies to control immigration into its borders are transferred to the third country through a spillover effect.

Here again, the concept of Europeanization emerges based on the perception of Wong (2017) who identifies several faces of this concept and makes an exciting presentation of the idea in light of EU foreign policy based on the role of the MS. However, what is exciting and relevant to this thesis is perceiving Europeanization as a variable. The author suggests that this concept, when seen through the lenses of a dependent variable rather than as an independent variable, explains how and why EU foreign policy formulation by and large stands to propagate its norms which is only an extension or projection of "national policies and policy styles onto the larger European structure." Wong (2017, p. 161) surmises that those MS who project their national preferences into EU policies are those who have the bargaining power and interest to do so. Concerning resettlement policies and in light of establishment efforts, there may exist discrepancies among MS policy structures. There is no detailed agreement that pragmatically applies to MS other than to adhere to the Copenhagen Criteria, to begin with – for example.

2.1.4 Implementing "Our Way of Life" at the local level.

The question and degree of compliance and convergence with and towards EU policy by MS, according to Wong (2017, p. 159) are reflected in the national interest. Wong maintains that in the area of human rights, for instance, shifts in focus on prominent issues as in the case of the stipulated three-Pillar structure of the Maastricht Treaty (1992), boils down to "conflicting

interest and coordination problems." This may imply that while EU norms and values may be diffused through policy, it is incumbent on MS first to recognise and adopt such policies that enhance the diffusion of such norms and values as being compatible with their national interest. Then these can further be translated into national programs like the establishment program.

Furthermore, at the national level, propagating the EU way of life, so to speak, touches on the sovereignty of the MS. Here Wong (2017, p. 159-160) cited the example of Sweden to portray how national sovereignty supersedes compliance to a common agreement relating to border control. Reinstituting control on Swedish frontiers (due partly as a measure to curb and manage irregular immigration resulting from the arrival of immigrants from the Middle East and Africa) was contrary to its adherence to the Schengen agreement. However, Sweden in this case and other MS in other instances are indicating that existing agreements fail to offer watertight solutions to contemporary issues. What is more, this pattern is similar to what MS are experiencing within their national borders. Mark for instance, together with other municipalities in their joint effort towards reception and establishment of newly arrived refugees, had a working document that detailed their approach to establishment efforts based on national legislation and which also reflected EU norms and values such as solidarity, integration, education, and attainment of job skills. Although Mark is pursuing and fulfilling her obligations single-handedly, the unit(s) charged with this task have these norms and values embedded in their work routines. Implementing the legislation compelling Swedish municipalities to receive and provide logistics for all newly arrived quota refugees may vary from one municipality to another. Still, it will fall within the parameters of the law. In other words, there can be discrepancies in how EU norms and values are diffused through initiatives aimed at facilitating their establishment.

2.2 Theoretical framework

The EU's commitment to building a stable internal market and an integrated economic union reflects its interest and that of MS. These interests are captured in the adage – promoting our European way of life - that Ms Von der Leyen esteems embodies the EU's present and future direction in its integration process together with MS (Margaritis Schinas Vice-President for Promoting our European Way of Life, n.d.). For this integration to occur, the EU needs to

function such that MS play a pivotal role even at local/municipal levels. While one may preliminarily esteem that the comprehensiveness of this process could be perceived through the lenses of the theory of intergovernmentalism [and it indeed could], the above review of previous literature related to this subject suggests otherwise. This is due in part to the focus of this study. The paradigm of norm diffusion is instead reflected in the academic analyses that have been reviewed from the previous writings of diverse authors such as Lindstrom (2005) and official documentation from the EU, Sweden, and the municipality of Mark, such as EU Commission President – Ursula von der Leyen's mission letter addressed to Vice-President Margaritis Schinas (Margaritis Schinas Vice-President for Promoting our European Way of Life, n.d.). The paradigm of norm diffusion has different schools of thought. Here, the constructivist perception or explanation will be used to approach the study interest.

According to the constructivist perception of norms, they can be defined and considered as facilitators or enablers of cooperating agents with individual interests. At the same time, they limit agents (states) without tampering with their goals or character/identity (Checkel 1999 p.84). According to Erol (2006 p.9), three traits can be associated with norms based on the constructivist approach. First, a norm can be seen as being prescriptive of standards of human behaviour. That is, they may attempt to formulate "regular and coherent practices". Secondly, norms can be associated with a sense of engagement as well as encompass a purpose of "appropriateness and concerns about proper behavior because actors are forced to conform to certain norms of appropriateness" (March and Olsen (1998 pp. 943ä-969) as cited by Erol (2006 p.9). Thirdly, according to Björkdahl (2002), norms bring together a collection of anticipated outcomes concerning the correct attitude of agents within a context or while acting out an identity.

An understanding of norms may thus be arrived at if one establishes this on the traits outlined above. The summation would be that behavioural patterns are expected to align with the agent's purposes (which in this study is represented by the EU and MS via the local authority), which is set apart by the quality of the norms (Björkdahl 2002, p.43). Björkdahl maintains that the expected oughtness (distinguishing characteristic) of a norm(s) is prescriptive. This prescriptiveness affects a norm-taker such that their interest and inclinations eventually are affected as well. This consequently can be reflected in their self-identification. Erol (2006) thus defines norms based on the constructivist assertion of the normative alteration

as “intersubjective understandings that constitute actors’ [states or agents] interests and identities, and create expectations as well as prescribe how appropriate behaviour ought to be by expressing values and defining rights and obligations” (Björkdahl (2002) as cited by Erol (2006 p. 10).

It is vital to identify traits that may be useful in singling out norms for better understanding. Looking at Manners’ (2000) suggested structure or organisation of norms into three standards of moral, social, and utilitarian makes comprehension of this concept more straightforward. While moral norms indicate the prescriptive oughtness of distinguishing the immoral from the moral, norms that are pertinent to identity construction based on the actor’s or agents’ interest represent the social standard. Here one can pinpoint traits that are predictable to certain behaviours, and it lends users statements some credibility. Spruyt (2000), who supported this assertion, also adds that initiation into the group through socialising with actors and their behaviour and norms is a constitutive aspect of creating an identity and inclinations. Spruyt (2000, p.69) further suggests that utilitarian norms play the role of regulating behaviour, making information available, diminishing insecurity or incertitude through institutional conventions and clear expected outcomes.

Based on the above conception and perception of norms, the next issue that needs to be addressed is how norms are propagated at a local level. Checkel (1999 p. 85) expresses the need to understand how norms are diffused or trickled down from international to national levels and how these norms represent constitutive effects. Checkel (p. 85) defines the concept of diffusion as a process that involves the transferral of and spread of a state/actor or population’s perceived ideologies, understanding of information to another population. It also could be said to occur within a social system over a certain period when novelty is transmitted via recognised canals. According to Checkel, the essence that these definitions of diffusion represent is “the central dynamic of concern to constructivists studying the spread/influence of norms”. Based on the above, norm diffusion at the EU level is expressed in policy formulation that relies on cooperation and integration between the central organs of the EU and MS and the local authorities. The EU may be identified in this discourse as a norm entrepreneur who aims to promote a way of life that enhances its integration and hence security, trade and migration paradigm, in collaboration with MS such as Sweden who further facilitate the process by enacting legislation that compels local authorities such as Mark to abide by. The end game with

regards to this discourse is the effect on the final norm-taker identified here as the newly arrived quota immigrant. Though to some extent municipalities such as Mark could count as norm-takers, in light of this research and base on the assertions of Checkel (p. 85), Mark can be seen as part of the machinery through which the EU propagates its norms with the aim of promoting the European way of life.

Furthermore, considering that in an integrated union as the EU, there occur diplomatic dialogues that result in giving and taking, which Moravcsik referred to as "a series of celebrated intergovernmental bargains," there is a need to understand this interdependency (Moravcsik,1993). As such, this thesis will briefly consider the theoretical approach of spillover as propagated in the theory of neo-functionalism to explore how the EU works collectively and at the grass-root level to meet its immigration objectives and how these efforts spillover into other areas of its activities with quota refugees, (Niemann and Speyer, 2017).

For all intent and purposes, the endeavours of the EU to attain and maintain an integrated institution could be said to rest on the shared common interest of its MS. This shared interest can be seen in the areas of migration, trade, and security. What could be said to make this common interest worth paying attention to is the fact that MS of the EU, in principle, do retain the option of exercising their Westphalian identity (Lumenlearning.com, 2019). Nevertheless, an integrated union more or less requires cooperation in multiple fields, which might be open to influences from actors/agents mainly motivated by political ambitions (Jensen 2013 p. 54). Jensen's neo-functionalism and its perception of spillover maintain that this concept is a "process in which political cooperation conducted with a specific goal in mind leads to the formulation of new goals to assure the achievement of original goals" (Jensen 2013 p. 56). In other words, one could reason that by focusing efforts on managing regular immigration such as newly arrived quota refugees, the EU, MS and local authorities effectively dictate the conditions for fulfilling their goal while limiting the effect of the newly arrived quota refugees in the process.

Perceiving this discourse in light of the paradigm of spillover is based on the necessity to view the propagation of European norms through a well-orchestrated establishment program as being not only successful but even as a means to expose dysfunctionalities (if any) that may be embedded in the process. Also, it has to do with looking at this aspect of establishment as part of the EU's mechanism founded on common goals and a mentality of synergised efforts

between the EU and MS as suggested by Niemann and Speyer (2017, p. 38). Looking at political spillover regarding governmental elites, Niemann and Speyer imply that it is the socialisation and learning of this group that leads to an exchange of ideas between MS. This socialisation enables "consensus and integrative outcomes" (p. 36) through which MS gain further insight into each other's motives. Though in this specific instance, these authors were referring to the movement of people within the EU, this can be used in this study when looking at norms seeing that the ideas shared between one MS can successively impede legislation in another MS.

The theoretical foundations that have been considered above in light of the interest of this thesis are applicable in comprehending the research problem as well as answering the research question. The perception of the European way of life – EU policy and how these are propagated through the establishment programs at the municipal level can be understood through norm diffusion with the EU, MS and municipality as agents as well as through spillover in light of policy formulation for attaining a stronger integrated political and economic Union. By combining these two theoretical frameworks to understand the research problem and answer the research question, this research will benefit from perceiving the EU as a norm entrepreneur with the added advantage of using its organisational structure to diffuse its norms across its MS. The following section dwells on the tools used to gather information to understand the study interest further.

3 Method and material

For this section, a qualitative research approach was applied. According to Gray (2018), this approach implies characteristics such as engagement, variability, and situating the phenomenon under study in context. If the adage – "Promoting our European way of life" rhetorically captures the EU's normative perception of Europe, then it is essential in light of this research to see the extent to which municipalities like Mark do reflect such perceptions in their day-to-day functioning as in the case of resettlement and establishment of newly arrived quota refugees. Therefore, this research approach will permit a close study of Mark municipality in light of its establishment efforts towards quota refugees and to what extent these efforts reflect EU norms and perception of a European way of life.

In the words of Bryman (2001), a "research strategy that usually emphasises words rather than quantification in the collection and analysis of data" is generally referred to as a qualitative research method/design. Moreover, this research approach fits this study and aims to understand the study interest in light of the study's aim. Also, by using this research approach, there is the possibility to obtain data that might be useful in describing the effect of EU norms on newly arrived quota refugees seeing that different norms may be intended or designed for diverse outcomes. Therefore, seeking uniformity in norms and their outcome in the resettlement process may seem short-sighted. Based on this qualitative research strategy, this study will use content analysis and semi-structured interview to gather, identify and analyse data from sources such as official documents made available by the EU and Mark municipality as well as responses from the interviews. The description and application of this research tool are presented in the following section.

3.1 Method

The proposed data collection tool for this study is content analysis together with semi-structured interviews. The collected data will be analysed thematically. Considering that the study aims to understand the extent to which a municipality such as Mark reflects and disseminates EU norms through its establishment program for newly arrived quota refugees, this study approach will allow for a review of related policies and actor's perceptions in relation to the establishment program. The data collection and analysis will shed light on the practical implementation of

initiatives based on these EU policies and to what extent these impede on quota refugees and their resettlement. Furthermore, this multiple methods approach to data collection and analysis will help to eliminate the shortcomings embedded in either content analysis or semi-structured interviews (Gray 2018, p. 198). The sampling method is purposive non-probability sampling as it is a case study, which Gray (2018, p. 215) suggests will help understand the policies and their implementation. The texts to be analysed will comprise documents from the municipality of Mark, Swedish Riksdag, and EU (Migration and Home Affairs) policy document. The semi-structured interview questions will be posed to the municipality of Mark and selected newly arrived quota immigrants residing in the municipality of Mark.

3.2 Material

The data collection for this study involved a mixed approach. That is to say, the usage of two data collection tools which include, content analysis and semi-structured interview. As a tool used for data collection, content analysis can be utilised to disclose particular words/codes and, in some cases, categories and themes as well as paradigms embedded in a qualitative text. This tool permits the user/researcher to dissect the text to unveil these codes, categories, and themes to arrive at conclusions on the general significance of the texts/documents concerning the texts author, the period during which the text was authored, as well as the environment. In carrying out content analysis on a text, the text must be coded, after which it has to be categorised before arriving at themes. Gray (2018, p. 691) maintains that in carrying out content analysis, attention should be paid to the "criteria of selection", which is meant to accord the process a degree of objectivity.

In addition to content analysis, a semi-structured interview will allow this study to narrow the questions on areas of interest and thereby augment the chances of eliciting helpful responses from respondents as they are asked to expatiate on the meanings they ascribe to the interest of this study (Gray 2018, p. 379). However, this does not mean the interview will not allow the respondents to express themselves, seeing that this will also help understand their perceptions better. Therefore, the need to have open-ended questions and follow-up questions in case the intended topic is not discussed extensively. In conducting each interview, while it is vital to be flexible, the researcher will endeavour to maintain control of the sessions, making sure that discussions focus on eliciting answers to the research question (Danby et al. 2011)

Concerning the process of diffusion of norms, which is perceived as a two-way interaction process (involving norm agents and norm-takers who both play vital roles), content analysis together with semi-structured interviews will be carried out on a relational basis. Being a qualitative study, these tools will enable the researcher to undertake an interpretive comprehension of texts and interviewees knowledge to unearth the dynamics involved with the study interest. This will facilitate understanding of norm diffusion based on their construction and evolution in the natural environment, as indicated by Devine (2002).

To accord the study a standard of reliability and validity, it is vital for this study to exhibit traits that imply that it can render the research procedure due credit. When considering reliability in research concerning content analysis, what one may be interested in (as is the case in this study) may constitute the following;

- Ensuring that the same data would be re-coded in like manner over a set time. This refers to stability,
- Reproducibility – it refers to the assumption that given the same text to a group of individuals for coding, their structuring of categories would turn out to be similar.
- Accuracy – statistically speaking, refers to the closeness of the classification of the coded text to a norm.

With validity, the goal is to be sure of the following;

- Closeness of categories: the goal here is that multiple classifiers be utilised to merge and define categories individually by enlarging categories by using synonyms
- Conclusions: there needs to be an awareness of the diverse levels permitted to draw deductions simultaneously such that the researcher has the assurance that these are parallel to the text in question. Note, however, that expounding on coding outcomes is at times incumbent on phenomena not found under selected codes.
- Generalisability: the perception of this attribute is founded on regard for categories and the reliability attached to these in the sense of according values to the ideas that this research question expresses.

The analysis of the selected text will be carried out with the above criteria in mind. However, the research question will constitute the focus to assist the process in arriving at the deductions seeing that the research question itself is deductive. Thus, the research question functions as an

aid to draw and maintain the analysis process on the study interest or aim (Gray 2018, p. 692). In this study, the research question that needs to be answered is how have municipalities like Mark adapted their quota immigrants' resettlement efforts to reflect and promote the European way of life.

3.3 The participants/sample

In this subsection, the document material and interview sampling are presented separately.

The content analysis for this thesis was carried out on data accrued from the municipality of Mark, the EU, and the Swedish parliament (Riksdag). The data that have been identified as relevant for this content analysis include

- The Checklist and routine for the reception of new arrivals quota refugees in the Municipality of Mark
- Act (2016: 38) on the reception of certain newly arrived immigrants for residence – Swedish Parliament (Sveriges Riksdag, 2016).
- EU Commission President von der Leyen's mission letter to Vice President Margaritis Schinas - EU Directorate of Migration and Home Affairs – 2019.
- The Council agreement on common basic principles for immigrant integration policy in the European Union – The Council of the European Union - 2004 (European Commission, 2017)

Concerning the guidelines for reliability and validity of research, as mentioned in the section above, the data for content analysis was read, and codes were identified and categorised before being thematised. This was done with the research question in mind and based on the theoretical framework adopted for this thesis. A critical aspect of the analysis was to pay attention to commonality in the different data from different sources rather than their diversity. Considering that the research question is deductive, using it helped to shed light on the issue of interest for this thesis which aims to find out whether the establishment program for newly arrived quota refugees as executed by the municipality of Mark functions as a channel through which the EU's perception of life is reflected and promoted. The obtained data that has been categorised and thematised will form the basis for drawing inferences when arriving at concluding statements.

The semi-structured interview; the respondents will include one administrative worker from the Labour Market Unit in Mark municipality (although initially, the intention was to interview two) and four selected newly arrived quota refugees who have experienced the establishment program coordinated by the municipality of Mark. There were two separate interview guides. One interview guide was for the municipal administrator and another for the newly arrived quota refugees (see Appendix # 3 and 4). According to Gray (2018, p. 215), the sampling method most suitable for this study is purposive non-probability sampling. Seeing this is a case study, Gray maintains that this sampling method will help the researcher understand policies and their realisation. At the same time, the author also emphasises that this type of sampling is appropriate in that the researcher needs to focus on persons who may provide vital knowledge that otherwise would not be attained with other sample designs. Caution will be taken to avoid any bias in selecting respondents. Seeing that the eligibility for the establishment program is for persons between the ages 20 – 65, and in a bid to attain representativeness as well as better criteria for comparability, of all the newly arrived quota immigrant respondents, each will come from those in their 20s, 30s, 40, and 50-65.

The respondents were contacted through the help of the integration unit of the municipality of Mark. A letter of information was drafted and sent to the municipality, which briefly described the study and its aim. The researcher repeated the same information before the actual interview sessions to all the interviewees. The municipality of Mark offered a room for the researcher to conduct the interview. It was left to the interviewees to decide where they felt was most conducive and quiet for the interviews to be carried out. Only one interview was carried out in the municipality premises. The other interviewees opted to be interviewed at their homes or in a public open area. Caution was duly taken regarding the Covid-19 pandemic in accordance with the recommendations of the Swedish Health Authority. Only one municipal employee from the municipality of Mark was interviewed due to some administrative restructuring. Instead of four newly arrived refugees, three finally agreed to participate in the interviews.

The languages used during the interviews varied between English, Arabic, Swedish, and Tigrinya. Apart from English and Swedish, the researcher used a licensed translator during the interview sessions. The sessions were recorded with a digital voice recorder with the consent of the interviewees. However, the researcher had writing material in case any respondent

changed their mind about their interview being recorded. Moreover, it was necessary to have writing material should there be any malfunctioning with the recorder. Using the recorder allows the researcher to watch for alterations in the interviewees' voice tone or pauses before responding to questions. This can be important during data analysis.

According to Danby et al (2011, p. 81), there is much to gain in an interview session when the interviewer establishes and nurtures a good rapport with the respondent. This goes a long way to help the respondents to relax and be comfortable during the session and hence respond to questions honestly rather than under some sort of duress. As mentioned in the letter of information, the interviews lasted between 45 – 60 minutes. This period was conducive to both respondents and the interviewer such that we had time to establish some trust for one another, discuss the questions and rounded up the session. In addition, the participants were informed of how long the sessions will last, and it was necessary to explain the ethical considerations that the research abides by.

3.4 Ethical considerations

The aspect of personal interactions in conjunction with research ethics needs to be taken seriously. Therefore, guidelines exist to assist both the researcher and research participants such that focus should be on the aim of the research, which in this study is to find out whether the establishment program for newly arrived quota refugees as executed by the municipality of Mark functions as a channel through which the EU's perception of life is reflected and promoted.

For this study, the Swedish Research Council guidelines have been considered, seeing it is a study carried out in the Kingdom of Sweden. This Council focuses on four ethical principles as vital in researching with participants, and the requirement includes detailed information, consent, confidentiality, and usefulness (The Swedish Research Council, 2017).

According to the Swedish Research Council (2017,p. 19-21), as a researcher, one must inform participants in the research effort about the aim and the purpose of the study. In this study, that has been fulfilled by contacting the municipality of Mark and the newly arrived quota refugees. In addition, a letter of information (see appendix #2) was also sent to the participants with information about the research and the researcher. Furthermore, the design of

the interview session was done such that participants' consent was acquired before the interviews, and this information was repeated during the actual interview session. Thus, the participants had time to reflect on their participation before the interview.

In considering the consent requirement, the researcher focused on ensuring that all interviewees correctly understood that participation was purely voluntary (The Swedish Research Council, 2017, p. 31). This information was shared with the participants before the planned interview sessions and at the beginning of the actual interview session. The interviewees were accorded the opportunity to suggest a suitable time and place for the interview. They all had direct contact details to contact the researcher if they needed any clarification. The participants were informed that they could terminate the interview should they feel uncomfortable or unwilling to go on. The purpose was to ensure that the interviews were carried out in a conducive environment for the participants (Danby et al., 2011, p. 81). This implied that the researcher needed to be flexible depending on the interviewees' situation and wishes.

The third requirement is confidentiality (The Swedish Research Council, 2017, p. 39-41). The researcher reiterated this aspect to all who participated in the interview that all information gathered would be processed with professional confidentiality without any risk of jeopardising their details. This is supported by Hermerén (2011, p. 67), who maintains that the essence of such requirements in research is to preserve the anonymity of those who voluntarily participate in the study. Having obtained access to a database with the names of potential interviewees, I proceeded to contact them individually. I also made sure the participants were not known to me personally. After transcribing, data analysis, and before the publication of the findings, the research will crosscheck with the respondents to ensure that their responses were correctly understood. This will also allow the researcher to reiterate this aspect of confidentiality.

Finally, the Swedish Research Council (2017,p. 52) also requires that the research fulfils the usefulness requirement. Therefore, collecting data mainly facilitates gaining knowledge to answer the research question for this study and nothing contrary. This means it will go against ethics to utilise such data for any other purpose.

Notwithstanding these above-mentioned ethical considerations, the researcher deems equally significant that readers of this paper be acquainted with some basic knowledge of the responses and data obtained from the respondents and the documents. Therefore, the findings/results presented in the following section are short summaries representing respondents' views and the content of documents in subtitles and themes.

4 Presentation of results

In this section, a presentation of the collected data will be done based on the dual method approach to data collection that comprises semi-structured interview and thematic content analysis. Concerning the semi-structured interview results, subtitles that reflect the research question will be used to facilitate the presentation of the collected data for the reader to attain a clear and vivid understanding of the study. The respondents who participated in the semi-structured interviews will be referred to as R1, R2, R3, and R4. R1,2 and 3 are newly arrived quota refugees, while R4 is a municipal administrator. The other tool used for data collection was content analysis, and the data collected will be presented under themes that also reflect the research question.

4.1 Part One - interview summaries

- **The willingness and necessity of the newly arrived quota refugee to adapt:**

All respondents began by presenting themselves with their names, occupations, and nationality. R1 and R2 are Syrian refugees aged 65 and 32, respectively. They speak Arabic, but R2 can communicate adequately in some basic Swedish. R3 is an Eritrean refugee aged 23 who speaks mainly Tigrinya. All three have participated in the establishment program since they arrived in Mark. Finally, R4 is a municipal worker representing the Labour Market Unit of Mark, charged with executing the establishment program for the municipality. She has been working in this capacity for about a year. She has previous work experiences of the establishment program from other municipalities and from the State employment agency, which she has now adapted to the procedures in Mark.

The newly arrived quota refugee respondents all confirmed that while they had norms and values contrary to those in Europe and Sweden, they recognised the necessity to be willing to make necessary adjustments in order to fit in into their new environment. However, R1 was keen to point out that the information about why they needed to participate in the establishment program was unclear. He also mentioned that he did not complete the two-year designated for the program because he was told he would retire soon. After that, he has not gotten any more support as he expected to become an active member of his local community. He says

"I feel abandoned by myself, to navigate this society that I barely know, much less understand and at this age. I have not been able to learn the language. There were no follow-ups on what had been done to see how effective it was or how to make it better."

R2 and R3 mentioned that they did not get a complete understanding of the vital role this program would play in their future in this new environment. They suggested that the municipality could emphasise the importance of the program, especially for those who are still young and active and have their lives ahead of them. To them, this was disrespectful and in disregard for their well-being as individuals with rights and privileges. R4 (the municipal administrator), while pointing out the role of the municipality and the initiatives taken so far to ensure that the establishment program for newly arrived quota refugees is effective, also mentioned that participation in the program guarantees this group more accessibility to prearranged and structured assistance. She referred to guaranteed housing and financial assistance as well as basic language training, to begin with. She mentioned that they work based partly on the individual's willingness but that participation in the program was necessary. Without the program's assistance, quota refugees will have to fend for themselves, which is an unlikely situation. As such, the municipality of Mark has adopted a three-fold approach towards working with this select group.

- **Identifying with European norms and values:**

According to the municipal administrator - R4, the municipality's threefold approach in executing their obligations regarding the establishment program accords the quota refugees adequate support necessary to adapt to Swedish and European norms and values. She said stage one focuses on getting the newly arrived quota refugees properly registered with vital authorities such as social welfare, healthcare, civic authorities, and education providers. The second stage deals with introducing and training the newly arrived quota refugees to be acquainted with basic routines like paying bills or where to go when one receives a letter from any public authority besides the municipality. The last stage for those who have succeeded in going through stage two is introducing them to the labour market by helping them situate their skills, job interest and developing a job portfolio. P4 also mentioned that they use a checklist to ensure that vital aspects of the program are not missed. She further noted that it was expedient for new arrivals to be given the opportunity to embrace the new way of doing things by doing it by themselves and getting the satisfaction thereof - like being able to pay bills via the internet

for those who have never used a computer before. R4 underlined the importance of mapping the competence of the new arrival and tailoring efforts to help them based on their competence with as limited interference as possible. She said the point *"is about sending a signal of what they ought to focus on."*

According to R1 and R2, being able to use the Swedish language is the key to opening the right doors into the new community. R1 says he needs to understand before learning to appreciate certain norms and values. R2 said being able to communicate better in Swedish would have propelled his progress far ahead than it is today. R3 mentioned that the program has helped change his view of life because he now realises the usefulness of being educated, self-sufficient, and getting a job. For R1 and R2, their participation in the program was understood to be compulsory because they had no option to survive. As such, they have accepted and identified with norms and values not based on choice but rather as an obligation.

R1 maintained that his values and norms have not changed but have only been readjusted to benefit him in this new community. He said

"before, I would not have accepted that my daughter or wife should sit at the same table at work or school with another man. However, this is something that I have now come to tolerate."

R2 meanwhile mentioned that he is keen to adjust to the new norms and values while ensuring that he replaces nonessential norms and values with those that help him meet his needs in this new environment. R3 also added that he now realises that there are norms and values that he must adjust to in order to enjoy living in Europe, such as knowing how and where to seek vital information and the essence of education to be able to be attractive as an employee as well as how to approach one's neighbours.

- **The role of the municipality in promoting the European way of life.**

According to R3, participation in the establishment program did not give him much understanding of what the municipality can do because he barely understands Swedish and therefore is uncertain about what efforts the municipality is undertaking to promote European norms and values. For R1, the program has been effective in altering his perspective of parenting and views on political association but not at all in the area of division of

responsibilities between husband and wife. R1 said he understands that here in Europe, one is compelled to acclimatise to a different perception of roles within a marriage. R2 underlined the fact that there is a marked difference between Syrian society and Swedish society. However, he was willing to do what it takes to adapt to the European way of life, seeing he is bound to establish a future here.

For R4, the establishment program is clearly indicative of European norms and values, and these are passed onto the newly arrived quota refugees. The municipality's establishment commitments allow it the opportunity to interweave such norms and values as solidarity, education, political awareness, and self-sufficiency in its activities. Nevertheless, she indicated that the reactions from new arrivals often vary. R4 further explained that, as municipal administrators, they do not consciously work to promote European norms and values. However, these norms and values are familiar to them and are part of their daily routines. As such working to propagate such norms and values comes naturally though its application depends on the case one has to deal with. She mentioned that a family from a rural area in Congo might find it difficult to adapt as fast as one from urban areas in Iran. It is the municipality's role to ensure that they get assistance as long as they need it. Thus, the municipality works from an empowerment perspective based on the competence of the new arrival.

R4 went on to say that incorporating European norms and values, which are very much Swedish values as well, has been done in the form of projects as well. The municipality has applied for specific funds to focus attention on women outside of the job market or others who wish to undertake some entrepreneurial venture. Such initiatives, she says, gives the municipality workers the opportunity to introduce and work together with the newly arrived quota refugees through discussions, language courses and more *"without specifically signalling that this is the norm or value we want you to learn. These norms and values are embedded in our daily routines".*

- **The European way of life is reflected in the municipality of Mark.**

According to the R4, the municipality of Mark reflects European norms and values in its establishment program. However, it should be noted that sometimes participation seems compulsory. This she mentioned is particularly visible in the case of new arrivals who assumed that coming to Europe implied sitting at home doing nothing more than housekeeping (for the

women). These individuals have to learn about the job market, how to get involved in it, and why. They have to prepare themselves for the long haul. They have to learn to empower themselves and depend on their personal abilities and not on their relatives who may not always be there because as she mentions

"this society has a different approach to what collectivism means. For Mark to improve her reflection of a European way of life, we need to invest in computer courses specifically for this group because, without that knowledge, one's progress is minimal. Mark also needs to incorporate practical job-related courses with language courses to ensure that new arrivals are eligible for the job market and are knowledgeable enough to exercise their rights and privileges in society."

R1, on the other hand, maintained that he felt ostracised from society at his age without having been given the full opportunity to learn the language or make friends with other locals. However, he is able to participate in political activities such as voting. For R2, with regards to the job market, the municipality of Mark has not reflected what he expected in Europe with opportunities. He mentioned that integration is good but slow and seems too structured. As R1 and R3, he thinks that the language and job courses need to be upgraded and tailored to meet specific needs. R3 mentioned that the program is just for two years. According to him, there needs to be more time to learn this new language and form of solidarity as well as the approach to the job market. He said the idea of being politically active is good but is hesitant until he can read and understand for himself what each political front stands for.

4.2 Part Two - content analysis summaries

From the documents or texts that have been read, there are a host of selected codes that have been set aside based on the research question of this study. Among others, the principal codes that have been identified and selected from the texts include phrases and words like; rights and responsibilities, workforce, adjustments, legal coercive measures, transferring knowledge, democratic process, effective integration and representation, equal terms and opportunities, two-way process, civic orientation, diversity of voices, integration, clear goal, ambition and determination, human dignity, diversity of voices, solidarity, peace and security. Tables with more extensive key codes are presented in *Appendix #1*. These tables contain the identified key

codes, which have been selected based on this study interest as expressed in the research question. As seen in the identified key codes for each document or text scrutinised, care was taken to ensure a fair representation from these sources. The selected key codes have been sorted into three different groups or categories, which include norms backed by legal procedure and legislation, norm propagation through process requirements and the part played by actors/agents with a vested interest. These categories will constitute the subtitles for this section.

- **Norms backed by legal procedure and legislation**

The in-depth analysis of the data obtained from the municipality, the Swedish parliament and the EU resulted in key codes that pointed to norms backed by legal procedure and legislation. For instance, some key codes under this category were information sharing, strategic partnership, civic orientation, adapt and adhere as well as principles of liberty. These key codes represent existing norms and values, which can be said to affect the establishment program designed for newly arrived quota refugees due to their backing from the legislation at the national level and policy at the EU level. Therefore, while the documents slightly differ in their key codes, the category reflects the commonality in norms and values whose promotion benefits from the backing of the law.

- **Propagation of norms and values through process requirements**

The category, norm propagation through process requirements, reflects a sum of key codes from all four texts that point to the impact of norms and values in the execution of EU policy via municipalities within the EU such as Mark. As part of the EU, Sweden actively participates in implementing directives from EU central organs such as the European Commission. While the Swedish parliament is a vital part of this process, the willingness and readiness of municipalities such as Mark are needed for norms and values to be propagated for norm diffusion to be complete.

- **The part played by actors/agents with a vested interest.**

Lastly, this category comprises key codes from the selected texts representing how norm agents or actors (such as the municipality and its workers) perceive themselves in the norm diffusion process. This is not only based on their efforts to abide by the stipulated legislation but also the willingness to ensure that norm takers such as newly arrived quota refugees perceive and

embrace the establishment process positively for the norms and values to attain their set objectives.

5. Discussion/analysis of results.

This section comprises an analytical approach to the data collected with the support of previous research and theoretical foundations/concepts which have been presented earlier. These analyses are structured under subtitles derived from the results shown above from the interviews and thematic analysis process.

- **Views and expectations of newly arrived quota refugees.**

The newly arrived quota refugees who participated in the interview sessions hail from diverse countries with different life experiences and are of different ages. Their understanding of the concept of norms and values regarding issues like solidarity, peace of mind, work and education, among others which are primal to establishing themselves in Europe according to Ms Von der Leyen's letter (Margaritis Schinas Vice-President for Promoting our European Way of Life, n.d.), are seemingly divergent. These three interviewees expressed their willingness and readiness to adapt to a European way of life. R1 and R3 reflected that the establishment program has not effectively helped expose them to society and vice-versa. Furthermore, as R2 pointed out, the perceptions, opinions and expectations of coming to Europe have not been met. According to R2, this is due to misinformation and lack of appropriate communication, poorly designed establishment efforts, not forgetting "compulsory" participation in the program. R2 stated that,

> *"Coming to Sweden at the age of 23, I had expected more than what we got from this program. I expected more study time and support in my studies seeing as I was enthusiastic and willing to engage more into learning and integrating… we could have had a separate program for ourselves and this would have been more effective rather than wasting these two years and not learning much"*

It is certainly not surprising that the views and expectations of newly arrived quota refugees are as such after arrival and getting in contact with European norms. Erol (2006 p.9) maintains that the characteristics of norms are that they are prescriptive of standards of human behaviour as well as convey a sense of engagement based on appropriate conduct. In other words, a newly arrived quota refugee, despite his or her eagerness to adapt, has to do so on

terms laid out by the host (and norm agent). The fact that newly arrived quota refugees find it odd that the municipality of Mark is focusing on issues that may seem irrelevant confirms the assertion made by Björkdahl (2002, p. 43) that the prescriptive quality of norms is the expected oughtness. For example, R1 expressed difficulties of how it is to tolerate now the thought of his wife sharing the same school desk with another man. Such expressions attest to the effectiveness of the norm and play to the advantage of the norm designer and its agent, which in this case is the EU and its MS - Sweden via the municipality of Mark. What needs to be reiterated is the fact that MS exercises sovereignty over how European norms and values which are propagated through EU organs become diffused into their national programs. Wong (2017, p. 159) perceives this expression of sovereignty from the point of view of the national interest of the MS. That is to say, how well MS meet the views and expectations of newly arrived quota refugees is incumbent on how these align with their national interest first and in relation to a European way of life. It may thus be said that while views and expectations of newly arrived quota refugees may seem varied, these are not of great importance when perceived from the viewpoint of the MS and their intended goal of introducing certain norms and values to this group.

- **The promotion/propagation of norms and values: a necessity.**

According to the municipality representative (R4), newly arrived quota refugees deserve to be saluted for bravery and audacity to flee diverse traumatic circumstances leaving their homes and loved ones. Moreover, to seemingly start afresh under unfamiliar circumstances, which requires them to acquaint themselves with new norms and values, is demanding. As mentioned above, coming in contact with new norms and values may present some oughtness, and this may be expected from norm takers (newly arrived quota refugees). However, the need for norm takers to adjust to their new environment cannot be overemphasised, judging from data from the interviews and content analysis. Furthermore, Spruyt (2000, p. 69) touched on the fact that utilitarian norms are used, among other things, to regulate behaviour, accessibility to information and minimise insecurity. It thus seems likely that the EU and MS drive to promote the European way of life through policy is effective. If norms are used to shape behaviour and regulate access to information, then as a norm entrepreneur, the EU, through the establishment program of MS as in the case of Mark, can be said to portray mastery of such norms which are designed to ensure that its territory and inhabitants are safe.

It goes without saying that the promotion and continuous diffusion of norms that reflect a European way of life by the present European Commission reflects the needs and aspirations of the present-day EU, judging from Von der Leyen's mission letter to Margaritis Schinas. Looking at how effective the establishment program is in the process of norm diffusion, it stands to reason that this canal represents a social system used for the transferral of accepted novelty (Checkel 1999, p. 85). The data collected indicate that legislation and vested interests relating to the establishment program can be traced back to EU policies whose effectiveness rests on the commitment of MS and their municipalities. This is what Flockhart (2001) referred to as EU-ization. From a constructivist perspective, the necessity to propagate EU norms through such a canal and observe its resulting effects as seen from the data demonstrate mastery of norm entrepreneurial skills in design and diffusion. R3 for instance indicated that learning the language and integrating into society was essential. This resonates with Von der Leyen's cry for education and job opportunities to be part of the portrait of the European way of life.

- **European norms and values set standards for the establishment program.**

Adherence to the Copenhagen criteria of 1993 (European Commission, 2016) as the basis for admittance into the EU also inevitably applies to the target population for this study though not directly. As R4 mentioned, European norms and values are embedded in the process of establishment. In other words, newly arrived quota refugees undergo an EU-ization process through the establishment program to ensure that norms and values of how the EU views security, economic stability and respect for human rights are passed on. This view is supported by Slobodchikoff (2010, p. 2). This author maintains that the Copenhagen Criteria are prerequisites for better solidarity and bedrock for tranquillity and normalcy in Europe. This view at the EU and national level trickles down to municipalities like Mark through legislation and thus can be said to influence newly arrived quota refugees as well.

The data collected clearly indicates that the establishment program reflects EU norms and values both from a historical perspective when considering the Copenhagen Criteria as well as from a more recent future perspective judging from the expressed ambition of the present EU Commission president. When discussing EU norms, author Flockhart (2010) adopted a historical sociology and social constructivist perspectives. With regards to the creation of a narrative based on previous experiences (historical sociology), the data indicates that policies backed by legislation, as seen in the results from the content analysis, have been used by the

norm agent (EU and MS) to support policies that enforce the designed norms. This entails for newly arrived quota refugees that their participation in the establishment program is more compulsory than optional. R4 supported this assertion by mentioning that participants in the program, like middle-aged women who assumed their lives would revolve around housekeeping, only attended the program because they felt compelled to do so. The social constructivist perception of norms propagated by the EU and MS through the establishment program, as evidenced by the data collected, reveals that norms and values impact and formulate the newly arrived quota refugees' present and future identity. R2 confirms this assertion by stating that it would not be unthinkable for him to adapt to new ways of life. However, R4 was clear when she mentioned that the municipality's efforts are to ensure that individuals are self-reliant and not dependent on a collectivist mentality.

Notwithstanding, EU norms and values as expressed through the establishment program also express the national preferences of the MS (in this case, Sweden). Based on previous readings, what every EU MS is basically expected to adhere to is the Copenhagen Criteria (Slobodchikoff 2010, p. 2). The extent to which MS adhere to when talking about establishing newly arrived quota refugees may vary even within municipalities in MS. R4 mentioned that their job was to empower the newly arrived quota refugees, not take over their lives and do everything for them. This statement was made regarding how others have been working before or are doing so in other municipalities. Looking at some of the key codes identified under the category norms propagation through process requirements from the working documents of the municipality, codes such as responsibility, conscious attitude, integration, participative and active inhabitants, and rules of conduct among others, reflect the attainment of the Copenhagen Criteria in the execution of the establishment program.

While the above may hold some substance, it, however, begs the question as to what extent newly arrived quota refugees really assume and exercise responsibility for their lives during the establishment program. R1, for instance, mentioned that he felt left out of society because he was too old to participate in the program. Moreover, the newly arrived quota refugees interviewed for this discourse all indicated that their understanding of the essence of the program coupled with their participation in it was vague. According to Wong (2017, p. 161), this can be construed as a national preference projection. The norm agents (that is, the

municipality and state) have the bargaining power and therefore set the guidelines for the establishment program based on their preferences.

- **The establishment program: a worthwhile concept that requires more impetus.**

While all four interviewees agreed that to some extent the establishment program has some worth and is a two-way process involving those who have just arrived as well as the inhabitants, all four also indicated that the program is in need of more impetus that ought to reflect actual conditions and meet the expectations as well as aspirations of both newly arrived as well as inhabitants of the municipality. Working from such premises will imply adherence to the Westphalian identity (Lumenlearning.com, 2019), for which the EU seeks to be beheld as a leader and promoter of (European Commission, 2016). However, besides being used as means to propagate EU norms and values, the establishment program represents an opportunity for the EU and MS to effectively and efficiently orchestrate "political cooperation conducted with a specific goal in mind…" (Jensen 2013, p. 56). The goal here is the promotion of the European way of life. Nonetheless, the establishment program portrays the EU's endeavour to attain integration based on its commonalities such as solidarity, job skills, education and sense of agency regarding political involvement. According to Jensen's neo-functionalism, this form of spillover boils down to the "achievement of original goals" (Jensen 2013, p. 56).

Looking at the establishment program from the theoretical perspective of spillover, it is without a doubt that the municipality of Mark is an extended arm of the EU working collectively across borders although at a local level to meet the objectives of the union aimed at the EU-ization of newly arrived quota refugees (Niemann and Speyer, 2017). Based on some of the key codes obtained from analysing the contents of The Council of the European Union's agreement on basic principles for immigrant integration policy in the EU as well as Von de Leyen's mission letter to Margaritis Schinas, it is evident that spillover effect occurs as joint policies are implemented at national levels within the EU. According to Gebhard (2017), the need for coherence within the EU is incumbent upon MS arriving at acceptable levels of "procedural efficiency", and this requires compromise solutions (Moravcsik 1993). According to the Swedish legislation regulating the reception and establishment of newly arrived quota refugees (Sveriges Riksdag, 2016), aspects of EU norms and values have become milestones for measuring how well municipalities carry out their establishment programs.

6. Conclusions

This study aimed to find evidence as to whether the establishment program for newly arrived quota refugees as executed by the municipality of Mark functions as a channel through which the EU's perception of life is reflected and promoted. This was important in highlighting the role played by MS in facilitating the execution of EU policy in the area of immigration with a focus on quota refugees. At the same time, the role of the EU as a norm entrepreneur has been confirmed. The study aim also helped to point to the part played by newly arrived quota refugees in the establishment program as norm taker. The aggregated and summarised analysis from the collected data suggests that the EU effectively uses local municipalities such as Mark to promote its norms and values through policies that MS helped promulgate.

This thesis has sought to answer the research question using more than one data collection tool (semi-structured interview and content analysis) and balancing the analysed results of the collected data against previous knowledge and theoretical frameworks. It can thus be said that the establishment program as carried out by the municipality of Mark against the backdrop of European norms and values indicate that EU policies in the area of immigration make use of a typological approach in the design of norms aimed at attaining the goal of ensuring and promoting a European way of life (Margaritis Schinas Vice-President for Promoting our European Way of Life, n.d.). By embedding these norms in the process of establishing newly arrived quota refugees, the EU, in collaboration with MS and their municipalities, systematically orchestrates some changes in the newly arrived quota refugees' perception of life to the benefit of the MS and consequently the EU.

As the data and the analysis indicated, the newly arrived quota refugee has limited alternatives and often feel compelled to participate in the program. How applicable a norm or value is, is determined by the purpose for which it has been designed not forgetting the parameters that were taken into consideration during its design. As a norm entrepreneur, the EU exercises its legitimacy based on MS compliance with its policies, especially those favouring the MS national priorities. It is therefore understandable that the mechanism or path for the diffusion of norms is through effective policy formulation. However, it is also evident that these policies are pro-coercive, as seen in the content of the establishment program, which reflects prioritising conditionality. For instance, the Copenhagen Criteria, as perceived by Slobodchikoff (2010, p. 2), lays the foundation for EU MS and aspirants as well as the EU's

strategy of associating its aid to collaborators based on the fulfilment of certain criteria (Lindstrom 2005, p. 593). It should be noted that the use of coercive methods is well refined, and the norms through which such methods are expressed are presented as necessities and solutions to issues. Such issues like empowerment and gaining job skills are presented as important the lack of which may be destabilising to the wellbeing of the newly arrived quota refugee, the municipality, Sweden and the EU. One can think here of activities that promote self-reliance and the need to be educated and earn a living, as pointed out by R4.

The EU indeed views its promotion of the European way of life via its policies as a win-win situation for all parties involved. While this is not unexpected, it also points to the fact that diffusion of norms is portrayed as being essential to the European way of life, which surpasses any self-centred motives of the EU as a norm entrepreneur. This plays to the advantage of the EU as it can be used to promote cross-border cooperation in other areas of commonality among MS. In terms of the spillover paradigm, this will imply socialisation and learning, according to Niemann and Speyer (2017, p. 38). Although, it may require more impetus as a strategy to promote international collaboration beyond archiving the desired results from the norms.

One can further conclude that the EU norms and values that are embedded in the establishment program are not as inclusive as purported. However, as respondents 1, 2 and 3 indicated, they are propagated to seem as such, and hence these norms cannot be said to fully enhance the goal of an initiative such as the establishment program pragmatically. The establishment program therefore can be seen as reflecting "conflicting interest and coordination problems" between the EU and MS (Wong 2017, p. 159). The willingness of the newly arrived quota refugees to participate in the establishment program is mandatory based on their initial understanding of the concept of establishment as well as the fact that their participation in the program is a prerequisite to obtaining financial support (primarily) in their new environment. Thus, it could be surmised that such propensity to demonstrate willingness and adaptability is a function of newly arrived quota refugees' lack of alternatives to survive in their new environment.

All through this discourse, the spotlight has been on the EU and how it collaborates with MS to attain the goal of designated norms. Nonetheless, this project has indicated at the municipal level that there are areas that need to be better structured and improved for the

establishment program to really be deemed as a win-win initiative such as the integration of pensioners. The perception that participation in the program is a coercive tool of the EU and MS requires to be redesigned. There is a need to develop a more efficient social communication strategy at the municipal level to ensure that diffusion is done at a level comprehensive to participants. The program needs to be presented as a stepping-stone that fosters relative and inclusive dialogue that leads to life improvement in accordance with EU's normative rhetoric rather than purporting to be one. Other related sample groups may hold relatively contradictory views to this subject, and that might be directly or indirectly vital to the establishment program improvement starting at a municipal level. Furthermore, the scope covered by this study needs to be widened to understand the usage of norm diffusion better. It will also be interesting to see different outcomes on further research in this area based on a larger study and with different paradigms other than norm diffusion and spillover.

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Appendix # 1 Content analysis

CONCRETE LEVEL: EU Commission President von der Leyen's mission letter to Vice President Margaritis Schinas …		**IMPLICATION LEVEL**: Themes
CODES	CATEGORIES	THEME(S)
European elections; special partnership; briefed; open and cooperative approach; trilogue meetings; EU legislation; application and enforcement; well-managed; legal migration; legitimate fears; irregular migration; external borders; asylum and return; threats; information sharing; bold steps; genuine; prevent; detect; holistic; resilience; coordinated responses; strategic partnership	Norms backed by legal procedure	Identification and adaptability of norms to local processes.

inclusive and cooperative; principle of collegiality; manage; policy area; strategic; coherent; consensus; transposing; guidance; swift action; transparency and ethics; integrity; value for taxpayers; representative; appropriate balance; representation; diversity of voices; integration; necessity; solidarity; peace; security; right skills, preserve; competitiveness; fairness; ambitious; inclusive; reality; united; dialogue; close cooperation; building bridges; common values; shared responsibility;	Norm propagation through process requirements.		
Ambition and determination; voices heard; working hand in hand; speak and listen; open; honest discussion; make life easier; relieve; burden; narrow the gap; engage; citizens' dialogues; trust and confidence; common solutions; values and responsibilities; human dignity; respect for different; harness; new experiences;	Part played by actors/agents with vested interest		

CONCRETE LEVEL: Act (2016: 38) on the reception of certain newly arrived immigrants for residence – Swedish Parliament …		**IMPLICATION LEVEL**: Themes
CODES	CATEGORIES	THEME(S)
Law; regulations; assignation; residence permit; procedure for distribution; criteria; considerations for distribution; time frame.	Norms backed by legal procedure	Identification and adaptability of norms to local processes.
Obliged; consideration; labour market conditions, total reception of new arrivals; priority;	Norm propagation through process requirements.	

Settlement; population registration; size of population;	Part played by actors/agents with vested interest	
CONCRETE LEVEL: The Checklist and routine for reception of new arrivals quota refugees in the Municipality of Mark		**IMPLICATION LEVEL**: Themes
CODES Accessibility; open dialogue; discrimination; influence social development; take advantage; political and democratic; rights; responsibilities; civic orientation; positive image; clear goal; anchor; yearly; continuous work; representatives; develop	CATEGORIES Norms backed by legal procedure	THEME(S) Identification and adaptability of norms to local processes.

Competence; creativity; workforce; inclusive; responsibility; housing; education; work; encourage; facilitate access to job market; equal opportunities; conscious attitudes; norms; values; rules of conduct; culture; participative; equal terms; create bridges; between cultures; enrich daily life; integration; associations; local agreement; task; broad starting point; social process; two-way process; participative and active inhabitants; requirements; understand; plan of action; experiences; improvement;	Norm propagation through process requirements.		
Vision; live well; multicultural; dynamic; responsibility; meeting places; education; personal goals; activities; division of responsibilities; quality of life; social process; listen; succeed; integration strategy; discussion; better integration; individual level;	Part played by actors/agents with vested interest		

CONCRETE LEVEL: The Council agreement on common basic principles for immigrant integration policy in the European Union – The Council of the European Union …	**IMPLICATION LEVEL**: Themes

CODES	CATEGORIES	THEME(S)	
Integration; Member States; communicate clearly; rights and responsibilities; basic values; must adapt and adhere; law; principles of liberty; targeting; combat against; discrimination; cooperation; normative adaptation; strategic investments; regulations; prohibits discrimination; transparent rules; legitimate; open; accordance, monitor and evaluate; adjustments; incentive; obligation; constructive; levels of government; mainstream consideration in policy formulation; adjust policy; share information	Norms backed by legal procedure	Identification and adaptability of norms to local processes.	

Dynamic; mutual; immigrants; long-term; demands; process; adaptation; new country; residence, receiving society; policy; enshrined; baseline and compass; Charter of fundamental rights of the Union; successful integration; employment; contribution; incentives; attention; effective action; recruitment policies; introductory programs; employability; binding element; local level; common forums; intercultural dialogue; welfare; stimulating havens; living environment; job training; enrich; non-coercive, legal coercive measures; institutional competencies; implementation; indicators; mechanisms; comparative learning; different phases	Norm propagation through structured process or program requirements and/or routines.		
Participation; resident; responsibilities; opportunities; encouraged; common; actively assuring; understand; benefit from; equal basis; hinder; new host; isolation; enhance; recognition of qualifications; skills; facilitate access; ethnic origin; basic knowledge; transferring knowledge; essential; achievement; equally and fairly; stimulate; positive; freedom to practice; a voice; belonging; democratic process; structured dialogue; differences; spheres; influence; effective integration policy;	Part played by actors/agents with vested interest		

Appendix # 2 Letter of information

Good day,

My name is Christopher Nsoh. I am a student at the University of Gothenburg, where I am studying an Executive Master's program in European Studies. I am presently working on my thesis entitled "Promoting our European way of life". A case of newly arrived quota immigrants' participation in the establishment program in the municipality of Mark – Sweden.

For me to get a foundation for this study, I would like to carry out interviews with municipal coordinators or administrators responsible for newly arrived quota refugees and newly arrived immigrants who meet the criteria to participate in the establishment program. The newly arrived quota refugees I am specifically interested in are of the ages 20 to 65 years old. I aim to interview one person between the ages of 20 – 30, 30 – 40, 40 – 50 and 50 – 65. I will be most interested in quota refugees who participated in the establishment program between 2017 until 2020.

I will be grateful to have direct contact with the municipal coordinator(s) or developer who can help me to inform newly arrived quota immigrants within these age groups about my research interest. The duration of the interviews is estimated to be about 45 to 60 minutes. The interviews will take place depending on the participant's location and time of choice during weeks 13 – 14. I will be most grateful for your assistance in this study. After I have received contact information for those interested in participating in this study, I will contact them to confirm the time and place that the interview will be carried out.

Please note that participation in the interview exercise is voluntary, and participants can choose to cancel or stop participation whenever they so, please. The participant's identity will remain anonymous. All the material gathered from the interviews will be stored in my university's mail account and later deleted/destroyed at the end of the study.

Please contact me if you have questions

Thank you in advance

Christopher Nsoh (tel: 07xxxxxxxx or email gusxxxxxx@student.gu.se).

Appendix # 3 interview 1

Interview questions to a municipal establishment program unit.

1. Can you please present yourself and the mission of your office/unit?
2. Can you briefly describe Mark's efforts towards the establishment of newly arrived quota immigrants since 2016?
3. Is this municipality pursuing the same trend, or are there any changes in your efforts towards the establishment of newly arrived quota immigrants? If so, could you mention a few and explain why you have adopted such changes?
4. Considering that all Swedish municipalities are compelled to participate in the establishment program, does Mark find this worth the effort? Please elaborate.
5. The establishment program indicates European norms such as solidarity, attainment of skills through education/jobs and effective integration. Do you agree?
6. How would you describe the benefits of such norms to your municipality?
7. In your working document regarding the establishment of newly arrived quota immigrants during the time with Borås Regionens Etablering Center, you seem to promote and reflect some EU norms such as respect for fundamental values of the EU and according opportunity for political influence to newly arrived immigrants. In what way is this deemed important to your municipality?
8. Has your establishment program's design considered the need to reflect the European way of life to your target group?
9. How effective has the establishment program been to promote European norms such as solidarity, peace of mind and interaction between immigrants and citizens? In what ways have these been instrumental for newly arrived quota immigrants to establishment in the new community?
10. Are there aspects of the establishment program in relation to a European way of life that you would like to change or improve?
11. How important is it for newly arrived quota immigrants to acquaint themselves with European ways of life? Why?

Appendix # 4 interview 2

Interview questions to newly arrived quota refugees who have participated in the municipal establishment program.

1. Can you please present yourself?
2. Would you say the information you received about the establishment program from the municipality of Mark was clear and understandable?
3. Based on that information, do you understand the importance of your participation in the program?
4. Your participation in the program was not compulsory. Was there any reason(s) why you decided to partake in the program? Or not participate at all?
5. Would you say that certain aspects of the program as carried out by the municipality focused more on educating you on a new way of life? Please give some examples.
6. Has the program facilitated your establishment in your new community? Can you elaborate how?
7. In your opinion, do you associate the program with any change in your sense of solidarity, peace of mind and attachment to your new community?
8. How has the program affected your job skills, views on political expression, security or interaction with other residents in the community?
9. Are there any aspects of the program that you like/didn't like? Can you expand on your response?
10. Overall, do you consider the establishment program as necessary in your integration into this community? In what way(s).
11. Are there some aspects of the program you would like to see improved? If so, why?
12. How important would you say the program is in ensuring you understand the way of life of your new community?