R.E.M.S
Reports from the Master’s Programme in Ethnic and Migration Studies

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VOICES OF NORRKÖPING
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Editors’ note

Voices of Norrköping is a collection of collaborative projects on the topics of migration, diversity, and belonging. These projects, informed by the stories and standpoints of a variety of people, were created by master’s students of the Ethnic and Migration Studies programme at REMESO, Linköping University.

While Norrköping is unique in many ways, it also serves as an example of how a city and its community can be transformed by immigration. The articles, essays and art projects presented in this compendium take Norrköping and its inhabitants as a starting point for the discussion of issues which have a broader societal resonance.

This publication, the second in a series, would not have been possible without the input and support of those whose voices are featured. Throughout our master’s programme, we have explored the idea that each person’s experience is informed by their position at the intersection of different privileges and oppressions. By understanding that each individual has a unique worldview, we can appreciate that their stories may differ substantially. As a class, we hope that presenting a broad range of views will illustrate that there is no single narrative when it comes to the themes discussed.

By listening to these voices, we can begin to understand, and by understanding, we can become more critical of how these themes are presented and dealt with. While some voices are still yet to be heard, we hope that future installments of this series will continue to encourage listening and understanding.

Ethnic and Migration Studies (EMS)

Class of 2019
This collection presents the stories and reflections of people who migrated to Sweden, told in their own words. These individuals came to Sweden at different times, from different places. Men and women, millennials and grandparents, refugees, labour-migrants and international students alike have something to share about their first encounters with their new home: Sweden. By presenting these stories side-by-side we hope to capture not only the commonalities of migrant stories, but to create space for the personalities and subjectivities of each collaborator to come through. There is no single migrant narrative or experience and listening to the stories of individuals helps us to understand that a variety of early encounters can produce feelings of belonging and nonbelonging when one is newly arrived.

While some of these stories come from people living in other parts of Sweden, many come from migrants living in the Norrköping area. Thank you to each storyteller for sharing their first encounters.

When I passed through immigration control at the airport … they checked my bags … they left no stone unturned … but they were not examining White people the way they were examining me. It makes you think … “Oh my gosh, am I a criminal?” … Why are they searching me like that? This was my first experience.

* 

I have learned one sentence, “Pratar du engelska?” because that is very important. Otherwise I would not have the chance to interact with people. Sweden is a very nice place but … when I first came here I was very depressed … I was feeling lonely and that made me really upset because I was away from my family and from my friends. You always have a cultural gap, especially when you don’t know the language, I think.

* 

I’m here with my qualifications, I’m here to have my dreams come true, I am not here to have some terrorist activities. *laughs* … I want to make Sweden feel like my home.

Arrived 9 months ago.

I arrived at the airport. At that time, I was smoking. I was even smoking in the Lufthansa flight. When I landed at the airport … it was -17 … a cold November day … it was snow all around … there was no smoking area in the airport. It was my first culture shock.

*
Each room was 9m² including bathroom. The bathroom was in one corner. You had to take everything out … to use the shower, then put it all back in afterwards. But we were so happy to have our own bathroom. … Most of the experiences were negative … we were waiting for a decision… listening to news from home, but the positive thing was that we could ski.

You also have encounters with the culture. My impression was “This is Sweden” based on where I lived [30km from the Arctic circle]. Locally, when they say “yes” they *makes a sharp inhaling noise* in agreement. I thought everyone in Sweden was like this.

**Arrived 25 years ago.**

It was a Sunday when I landed … I went to the migration office. They asked me why I came to Sweden and which documents do I have. They sent me to a city called Märsta in a bus … I could not speak the language and that was a very difficult time for me. When we got to Märsta the bus driver told me to take another bus … I stood there and waited for so long. No bus came.

*You can understand how hard it is coming into a new country and being told to take bus or train to a place where you have no idea where it is. I felt like “Will I be able to survive in this new country where you are left on your own?”*

**Arrived 14 years ago.**

I went to the church; really good people, helpful people, kind people … The priest was really nice, she welcomed everybody, she … told us “You are welcome.” We tried it … and we continue going there and being in all the ceremonies and we got connected to know the culture. They were teaching us everything [including] the Swedish language. I got to know people, I got to have friends. It was the first and the most important thing for me … the church and the people in the church. I felt even better than being in my country. Here was actually better, the rights that we have as women, everything was actually perfect in my eyes.

*I got to know that Swedish people are really nice people but … it is not really easy to connect to them, to be friends with them, to find friends … I really don’t know what I should say, how I should behave. Still I have not learned, how I should behave, what I should say … it is one of the problems that I have.*

**Arrived 7 years ago.**

I came to Sweden all alone. I was 19. I was very nervous. After the plane, I took the train, and then a bus … I am not sure how the bus system functions in Sweden … should I talk to the bus driver? Should I press any button? That day something wrong happened to the bus, so it just stopped in the middle of nowhere and I was ready to burst to tears that day. I think the bus driver was very Swedish. I used my poor Swedish from that time, I said “Hi, I want to go to the school” … He didn’t really talk to me and I didn’t press any button, I don’t know where I need to stop, but he just stops there anyway… The first day is just nervousness and awkwardness altogether.

**Arrived 3 years ago.**
You have to wait for a long time for your resident permit in a camp. After that you have to find an apartment to live in… Then you begin a new language of study. It's a long procedure. It was much better in my country.

I came here because of war… We had the idea it can be better here.

Arrived 6 years ago

I came to a country where you don’t know your neighbours. You cannot go and visit them the way you want, compared to my home country… Here, I say hello but some of them do not even greet me.

It was difficult with the language, I tried speaking to people in my broken English… It was difficult for me to communicate with people. It made me feel like an outsider. When you cannot have interactions with your neighbours, it seems like they don’t want to have you.

These experiences have influenced me negatively but the more I live the more I came to understand the Swedish culture and have learnt how to deal with it. It was a new culture and I had to adapt.

Arrived 15 years ago

My mum set up a house for all of us… the one-bedroom apartment. That was our first impression of Sweden. Most people, when they think about Africa, they think we live in huts or something, but actually we had a family company. We lived in a very big house. I had a big room, my own bathroom… we went from that… to a one-bedroom apartment… with ten people living in it.

At school… I didn’t see anyone of my colour. When we were getting dressed for sports I could clearly hear the girls talking about me, my colour, my figure… and they often accused me of stealing their stuff. I left gym class early so I could run into the bathroom and change so they didn’t have anything to comment on. I remember one time… they took my stuff, they emptied it all out on the floor (to see if I was stealing). It was a traumatic event I guess.

‘Til today, I don’t feel like I am Swedish. I will say it but I don’t feel it… because I feel like the Swedish society has a way of… segregating people. That’s my experience, I won’t speak for any other immigrant.

Arrived 16 years ago

My first experience was with two lovely old ladies. They were at my door with this big bouquet of very beautiful roses. It was the best bouquet I’ve ever seen in my lifetime… I just thought “Wow, I don’t know these people but to bring me this bouquet just to welcome me?” It felt so good because you know when you’re leaving everything behind like that… wondering how you’re going to start over again somewhere… to have that kind of reception began to calm my worries.

I did not expect that I was going to sit in a class to be learning language at the age of almost 38. It just didn’t make sense to me… the teacher saw I was not happy and instead of trying to help me come out of that unhappiness… she made me feel stupid. I was lost, I could not concentrate… She expected me to write, but I couldn’t. You feel degraded. You’ve been brought to a level so low. I came from a [senior managerial position], I was a Director, and I come into a country where nobody knows who I am… to them, I was a nobody. I felt so devalued… so humiliated. Nobody seemed to care.

I have never felt comfortable in Sweden, even until today… even though people have been supportive along the way. My goal now is to see my kids go to university… once they do, I’ll pack my bags and be on the next flight.

Arrived 4 years ago.
My first impression was that Sweden is a very clean country. People are quiet, conservative with different culture and it is very hard to make friends.

I felt as an outsider but as time went by I came to learn the Swedish culture and their language, then Sweden became like a home to me. It took me some time but after learning the language, it became easy and I felt like this country can be my home as well.

Arrived 14 years ago
LINGUA FRANCA - IS IT THE ONLY WAY TO COMMUNICATE?
Language is a tool for communication. When one moves to a new country, learning the local language is an obvious goal. The interplay of different languages has come increasingly into focus as the global community becomes more interconnected and within this intersection of different languages and cultures there is a need to find a common ground for communication; a lingua franca. This *lingua franca* is currently English.

Norrköping could be described as a city in transformation and diversity of cultures coexist in the self-proclaimed municipality of “colorful Norrköping.” Previously characterised by a strong industrial sector, this city has been described by the Norrköpings Kommun as developing into an increasingly “knowledge-driven” environment, as evidenced by “a growth in enterprise and educational institutions.” According to Norrköpings Kommun, the population of Norrköping increased by 2 328 people in 2016, largely due to migration.

We wanted to find out how a multicultural group of people capable of speaking several languages experience the diversity of multilingualism in their daily life.

More specifically, we wanted to create a relaxed social environment where we could discuss this topic with people who have multilingual skills who are in the process of learning Swedish. We ran a focus group discussion with five participants who represent the language groups: German, French, Bangla, Arabic, Bahasa Indonesia, Mandarin, Hindi, Urdu and English, the lingua franca. Our initial aim was to investigate the advantages and disadvantages of multilingualism, to determine if there were any perceived hierarchies between different languages, and to explore the associations attached to certain languages and their speakers. However, the focus group discussion took another direction which challenged these initial preconceptions.
**Lingua Franca**

One of the major topics that took the intended discussion on multilingualism into another direction was the dominance of the English language. When asked which languages they use in their daily life, participants all agreed that they use their mother tongues. However, all participants emphasised that knowing English helped them to settle into Swedish society. Participants also mentioned that English was essential for communication between multicultural families and is a useful tool for those looking for work and working in Sweden. According to the British Council around two billion people, over a quarter of the global population, will be using the English language by 2020. So, how has English become a lingua franca?

Shahadat, one of our participants with a Bangladeshi background, referred to the issue of colonisation and how British dominance led to a spread of the English language across Asian countries; “English is the second language in a lot of countries, the colonies of England.”

Moving away from the colonial aspect, another participant, Wu, pointed to the dominance of the English language in his current field of work: “So, my mother language is Chinese, and I speak English as a second language, because I have been working in academics for many years.” Furthermore, having a strong command of English seems to be a necessity when it comes to finding a “good job,” for example, jobs in the IT sector.

Another reason English is commonly defaulted to as a lingua franca is the vast influence of American culture and English-speaking culture more generally. While some celebrate the American culture and its ever-increasing accessibility, others disapprove of it, because it often undermines one’s own culture.

The latter seems to be the case for one of the participants, Dilla. She describes that though American culture and technologies are popular in Indonesia, if she speaks English people tell her to not pretend to be so “high-class.”

The English language seems to act as a ‘passport’ of sorts when migrating or visiting any foreign country. While the local language is always important, even in those countries which don’t list English as an official language it proves to be very useful when first arriving. In Sweden people have the opportunity to communicate almost with any person or any service in English, making it easier for them to get help in their everyday lives. Mohammad, another participant, appreciates that “You can use English even in the applications. When you want to do an application and you cannot do it in Swedish, you can do it in English and it’s authorised as a language in Sweden.” Without the prominence of the English language, even this focus group and report may not have been able to take place.

**Different languages in different domains**

Which languages are used is dependent on one’s socio-cultural and socio-economic environment. Aside from the discussion on the importance of the English language all participants could identify and describe that they chose to use different languages in their work, home, and social contexts.

**Work** | The need to know the local language is largely determined by the area of work the participants are engaged in as well as their other language skills. For example, jobs that require social interaction with those people well-established in Sweden often demand the ability to communicate in the local language.

For Megan, who works at a zoo, Swedish language skills did not fall under the job requirements. However, she thinks not being able to communicate in the Swedish language prevents her from performing and participating at the level she desires, especially when encountering the younger generation.
At her workplace. Megan told us “the one thing that I miss from ... my job back in England is that I cannot educate and inspire the children in the same way... because children at that stage don’t have the same level of English as some of us do and that is a very big difference that I’ve found, definitely since moving here.” Likewise, Shahadat experienced difficulties in his job as a consequence of not knowing the local language.

Mohammad, however, has a completely different experience where he benefited from his mother tongue and did not feel the need to learn Swedish quickly. He owned a business working with Arabic stores for several years in Norrköping, thus he “used Arabic all the time” to connect with his Arabic-speaking customers. When he communicated with public or social services he was able to communicate with the lingua franca English.

Similarly, Wu’s line of work did not require any knowledge of the Swedish language and like Mohammad, he did not learn Swedish at first. He says that his daily life is in English, “because [he] is in the academic community” and that “for the academic area English is kind of enough in Sweden.”

Social | Ultimately, communication is about being able to convey a message from one point to another, and to reach an understanding with the people around you. All participants expressed that who they interact with determines which language they use. This allows them to perform code-switching – the practice of alternating between two or more languages in a single conversation.

Many Swedes display an interest in foreign languages. Wu shared an anecdote from his time living and working in Uppsala where he and his friends had a laugh with a Swedish guy who spoke fluent Chinese, while Mohammad happily shared his encounters with Swedes who expressed an interest in Arabic. He thinks that Arabic is a common language because it is spoken by more than a billion people in the world. Shahadat echoed this, saying that “Swedish people have an interest in Arabic” and observed that “there are a lot of Arabic people in Norrköping.” Furthermore, he himself is able to socialise in his mother tongue Bangla, because a lot of Bangladeshis live in his accommodation.

All participants emphasised that knowing the local language is quite important to feel that they are part of society. As Dilla nicely puts it: “I learn that people respect you more if you know their language and then you get closer [to them].” It seemed that for most, learning the local language was a key part of achieving mutual respect. While English is often the lingua franca, it is clear that what defines the common ground for communication depends on the context.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank Dilla, Megan, Mohammad, Shahadat and Wu for sharing their experiences with us. It was our pleasure to have Fika with all of you!
Svenska för invandrare, or Swedish for Immigrants, (SFI) is a state-funded programme aimed at facilitating the integration of migrants by teaching them the Swedish language. However, since the ‘refugee crisis’ of 2015 onwards, this programme, along with a number of essential services which support those newly arrived, has come under increasing pressure and the quality of education provided in different parts of the country has become concerning inconsistent.

In May 2018 leading Swedish newspaper Dagens Nyheter published an opinion piece raising concerns about the decline of the national education initiative. This article, written by former SFI teacher Camilla Nilsson Wallin, detailed the overcrowded classrooms, insufficient resources and support, and poor organisation that inhibits teachers from providing the quality of education students deserve. Nilsson Wallin decided to leave SFI after seven years due to mounting pressure on teachers and declining standards of teaching across the organisation.

Rooted in the assumption that once a person is able to communicate in the Swedish language they are better equipped to enter the labour market and participate socially, the SFI has long been viewed as nothing short of critical to ‘successful integration.’ If language is a key aspect of integration, then the effectiveness of SFI is paramount, as the skills migrants do or do not develop in this programme inform the extent to which they can participate in Swedish society. Building on the issues presented in this opinion piece, forums on The Local SE, an online news network, revealed that many migrants have experienced increased difficulty starting and benefitting from SFI courses in the last few years. We decided to ask migrants from different municipalities in Sweden who had, at some point, enrolled in SFI if they had also been affected by these challenges. Respondents are migrants of a range of ages who come from various cultural and educational backgrounds.

Swedish for Immigrants

SFI is a training programme mandated by the state for adults over 16 years of age providing newcomers with classes teaching basic written and conversational Swedish language skills. SFI consists of three levels. Level 1 (courses A-B) is for students with limited or no education and teaches Swedish for everyday situations. Level 2 (courses B-C) is for students who have at least 5 -11 years of education. At this level students learn to speak, read and write Swedish that is relevant to daily and working life. Level 3 (C-D) is a more advanced level, ai-
med at students who have completed 12 years of education or more. Courses are run for at least 15 hours a week and vary in their intensity and speed. All students are entitled to continue studies until completion of the highest course. Some migrants must participate in SFI classes in order to receive financial support from the state. Support for adult learning may take the form of teaching, supervision, study support and assessments of knowledge, skills and competence gained. According to a report on adult education by Regeringskansliet, the Local SE forums describing waiting periods of up to 9 months in some municipalities.

While support comes from the state, it is the responsibility of the municipal adult education (Komvux) to organize SFI-courses for immigrants. Quality between different places may therefore vary considerably depending on the municipality’s resources, availability of teachers, number of immigrants, and management. Some municipalities have opted to organise SFI through private providers and other adult educational associations such as Folkuniversitetet.

“The SFI has long been viewed as nothing short of critical to ‘successful integration.’”

Ministry of Education and Research, SFI courses should normally become available to migrants within three months of the individual’s registration. Each person arriving in Sweden should register as a resident of a municipality, and depending on his or her educational background, the student should be placed in one of three levels. Since 2015, there has been an increase in the number of migrants enrolling in SFI which has placed unprecedented strain on the system. Waiting lists for starting SFI courses are often lengthy, with contributors to The

A tool for social inclusion is now creating social exclusion?

While we collected a range of positive, neutral and negative experiences from SFI students across various municipalities, what struck us was the clear divergence between the potential for SFI to promote social inclusion and the feelings of frustration and inadequacy experienced by those enrolled. Some respondents praised the SFI and its teachers, believing this programme assisted their transition into Swedish society. However, other respondents, highlighted “alarming” deficiencies in the current SFI system, some believing it did not help them at all. While SFI is intended to be the first step towards successful integration of migrants into Swedish society, some of our respondents explained that they often feel very let down
“Every two months, you get a new teacher because you change your level in the language and many people were in the same situation.”

and observed that some of their classmates “can’t read or write.” “Their needs are different,” one respondent explained, when asked about the difference in learning abilities and goals migrants aimed to achieve from learning the local language. The SFI divides classes based on literacy and education level, without necessarily considering the difference in Swedish language abilities between students. Another respondent recalled that since she held tertiary qualifications, she was placed in the advanced group, level 3, and shared a classroom with students who had progressed from level 1 and 2 and had subsequently developed a more extensive grasp of Swedish. A different respondent told us that they felt unable to “achieve their goals” at SFI as “There is no book you can read. It was just paper-photocopy. There was no one teacher – maybe “every two months, you get a new teacher because you change your level in the language and many people were in the same situation.” Another respondent felt that the SFI courses were not helping them to feel comfortable in Sweden, stating that “whenever I have to go to SFI, I feel sad but I have to go because I will not get [my financial support] if I don’t go.”

Individuals may experience social exclusion when they are, for whatever reason, unable to participate fully in economic, social, political and cultural life. Participation may be hindered by a lack of access to resources or networks and often causes individuals to feel invisible, silencing their voices and preventing them from accessing their rights and dignity. Since knowledge of Swedish is needed for meaningful participation - both socially and in the labour market - language skills play a major role in determining to what extent individuals experience social inclusion. Swedish for Immigrants is therefore critical in shaping migrants’ experiences and success in Sweden.

According to Skolverket, the Swedish National Agency for Education, only four in ten students finish their courses at SFI. A survey conducted in 2015 showed that of the 138,000 students enrolled that year, only 37 percent of students completed their studies. This study also found that of students who postponed their studies at some point, 22 percent dropped the classes entirely, while 41 percent opted to continue the course the following year.

Finding an alternative

Respondents who voiced frustrations with the SFI-education they had been offered by their municipality eventually turned to Folkuniversitetet, an adult educational association providing courses on a range of subjects to people across Sweden. Folkuniversitetet has also played a major role in helping eligible migrants to learn the Swedish language. Folkuniversitetet - also a recipient of state-funding - has been of particular use to those migrants coming from higher education or professional backgrounds who are keen to learn Swedish at an accelerated pace. Folkuniversitetet offers courses both within the SFI-curriculum and general Swedish language courses.

Respondents who had negative experiences at SFI described their positive feelings towards programmes at Folkuniversitetet. One respondent felt that the major difference between municipal SFI and Folkuniversitetet was that the former was “not about quality but rather about quantity.” The Folkuniversitetet determines which class students are enrolled in by assessing “how much Swedish one can speak or write.” This respondent felt that this difference was an essential part of tailoring the education to each student, “enabling [them] to receive the ... attention needed.” A second respondent explained her view of Folkuniversitetet as “one hundred percent positive...I spent just two terms there but it was with great methods and great teachers, they cared about us and I really enjoyed, I learned and I could start talking Swedish.” A third respondent moved to Folkuniversitetet “after spending six months in SFI”. This respondent stated that since the move “I am learning Swedish language better but now my [migration officer] wants me to go to SFI in the
morning and come to Folkuniversitet in the afternoon. I am not happy with this decision but until I find a job, I need to come so I can get money.” For the fourth respondent, compared to their experiences at SFI, at Folkuniversitet “it was full time study... there is a book you can study from and it was more professional... it was much better for me learning [there],” they explained.

Where to from here?
Learning the Swedish language is essential for the integration of migrants. At present, the SFI is the instrument supposed to ensure that those who are newly arrived acquire these skills and are able to experience a greater degree of social inclusion. However, as evidenced by reports of the decline and insufficiencies of the SFI system, the educational needs of students are not being met. Respondents’ accounts point to the lack of consistency, organisation and quality teaching at SFI, sentiments echoed in Camilla Nilsson Wallin’s article. This calls for improvement on the issues outlined; improvements which could be informed by the positive experiences of students who learned Swedish through Folkuniversitet. Building the SFI’s capacity to equip its students with a higher standard of education is closely linked to both the structure of the levels and the working conditions and training of teachers. The lack of consistent training and availability of teachers has a direct impact on students’ learning experiences. The disparity in the quality and resources of different SFI branches should also be addressed, respondents told us, as their experiences of SFI varied considerably depending on where they learned and who their teacher was. Finally, the fact that the level students are placed in is still determined by literacy and former education, rather than by their Swedish language abilities, is illogical and in need of urgent review.

SFI, for some, fulfils its role of assisting migrants to build their capacity and enhance the integration process. However, for those enrolled where the provider and implementation are failing, the SFI system has caused frustration and delayed migrants’ transition into Swedish society.

“Language is the key to society. Of course it’s good that many of the students that interrupt their courses get a job, but students need the language for more than just what they learn in their profession.”
- Maria Rönn (deputy chair of Lärarförbundet, the Teachers’ Association)
VEM ÄR INVANDRARE?
WHO IS AN IMMIGRANT?

Holly McCarthy & Frida Larsson Taghizadeh

"I think this word [immigrant] has several meanings to different types of people." ‘As an immigrant, I am able to remove misconceptions about immigrants.’ "I was forced to be an immigrant and the feeling of being an immigrant is not easy.” “To me it is a word and nothing else, if somebody addresses me as an immigrant that’s ok, because it’s true.” “I am proud to be an immigrant ... I am learning something here and I am [bringing] some things from home.” “We are, as immigrants, lost.” “I don’t feel good using the word immigrant. If you are here, then it means you no longer have a home.” “I was made to feel ashamed of where I came from, but I learned later in life F**k this I should own where I come from, I’m an immigrant... but [it] does not define me.”

- Voices of self-described “immigrants” living in Norrköping, Sweden

Immigrant has become a loaded term. It has become dislocated from its definition and nowadays the word immigrant, along with its Swedish equivalent invandrare, seem to carry negative baggage. The repeated use of loaded expressions - such as ‘immigrant-dense suburbs,’ ‘immigrant youth’ or ‘immigrant women’ - in political and media discourse warning about a broader ‘immigrant problem’ may be linked to the steady transformation of the word immigrant into something inherently negative. But how is the word immigrant actually defined - and perhaps more importantly - what does it mean to those who are labelled as immigrants?

Norrköping, a city where 25 percent of residents are either born overseas or have two parents born overseas, has been significantly shaped by immigration. We decided to ask self-described “immigrants” living in Norrköping What does the word immigrant mean to you? Are you proud to be an immigrant? Do you think the word immigrant carries any positive or negative connotations? Drawing on these voices, this article will explore the distortion of the word immigrant in political and media discourse and how the negative associations it has collected have a real impact on those labelled as immigrants.
George Orwell once wrote that “If thought corrupts language, language can also corrupt thought.” Orwell contends that language and thought are constantly informing one another. In recent years, language has become a battleground for visibility, acceptance and equality. Labels hold immense power and have the capacity to address power imbalances. From reclaiming ownership of the labels Black and Queer to restoring humanity to certain groups by describing them first as people; those referred to as bums or homeless, as “people experiencing homelessness” for example.

In 2015 the global news organisation Al Jazeera announced that it would cease using the “umbrella terms” migrant and immigrant, when referring to those persons crossing the Mediterranean in search of safety. Al Jazeera online editor Barry Malone explained that refugee would now be used instead, as migrant had “evolved from its dictionary definition into a tool that dehumanises and distances.” However, despite being applauded for promoting human rights with this move, Al Jazeera’s decision confirms the distortion in meaning of the words immigrant and migrant; a group seemingly unworthy of compassion. This decision illustrates a trend of doing away with problematic or loaded language instead of confronting the discrimination or structures that created the negative baggage.

“I don’t think that to be a migrant or to be an immigrant is a wrong thing.”

Respondent 2

“The English word immigrant first appeared in 1792 and comes from immigrate, a derivative of the Latin verbs migro and immigrō - meaning “to migrate,” or “to depart” (to another place). The Oxford English Dictionary and Collins Dictionary respectively define immigrant as “a person who comes to live permanently in a foreign country” or “a person who has come to live in a country from some other country” usually “in order to settle there.”

In English, the noun expatriate - or expat - comes from medieval Latin; ex meaning “out of” and patria meaning “fatherland” or “native country.” Merriam-Webster defines an expatriate as someone who “lives outside the native country.” If we held onto these definitions, immigrant and expatriate would be used interchangeably. However, the term expat is commonly associated with affluent Westerners, usually White, living abroad. There is a hierarchy of labels relating to those who migrate, a hierarchy closely linked to both class and the prevailing colonial legacy. Those positioned as White are more often described as expats, while those who are not seen as White are commonly labelled as immigrants.

“To me it is a word and nothing else.”

Respondent 2

When asked to reflect on the word immigrant in their countries of origin, respondents told us that this hierarchy is also observable. One respondent explained that in Brazil the idea of the “good immigrant” is
“someone from Europe” but that people coming from other countries such as Haiti were viewed negatively. Similarly, another respondent, when speaking about India and its caste system, told us that “a person from Africa”, for example, would not be discriminated against for being from Africa but on the basis of “skin tone” as immigrants also “fit into this caste system”. However, “people coming from the West… are put in the category of expats, and they will always be seen as people coming with money” all of which illustrates “the legacy of the colonial hangover.” It is clear that immigrant and expat are terms that carry implicit ethnic and cultural dimensions.

In the Swedish context, official terminology used to define a certain group often reflects changes in state policy. The Swedish term invandrare (immigrant) was coined in the mid-19th century and comes from the verb invandra, which means to “wander-in”. In the 1960s, this term partly replaced utlänning (alien or foreigner), which had gathered negative connotations. This shift can be traced in official terminology, where Utlänningsutredningen (a state commission on foreigners), which produced a series of reports in the 1960s, led to the replacement of utlänning with invandrare in official documents. The following commission was consequently named Invandrarutredningen (1968 - 1974), and in 1968 the institution formerly known as Statens utlänningskommission (National Aliens’ Commission) was renamed Invandrarverket (National Immigration Board; today known as the Migration Board).

Invandrare was, for a long time, used as the official designation for those born abroad or born in Sweden with at least one parent born in a foreign country. However, by the 80s and 90s this term - which was originally intended to promote inclusion - began to be closely associated with what were perceived as “immigrant problems”. Cultural differences and socioeconomic issues - such as unemployment - were portrayed as problems that were inherently linked to being “an immigrant”, as evidenced by an increase in research in this area and reports such as “The Criminality of Immigrants and Immigrant Children” (Invandrare och invandrare barns brottstighet, 1996) by Brå - the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention (an agency under the auspices of the Ministry of Justice).

In 1998, the government decided to appoint a taskforce to look into the use of invandrare in legal and institutional documents. Citing its vagueness and risk of “grave generalisation”, the resulting inquiry (Begreppet invandrare – användningen i myndigheters verksamhet DS 2000:43) recommended that the term invandrare be avoided.

Nowadays, persons with foreign background is commonly used to describe, and to count, citizens born in another country or with two parents born in another country. However, in the media and political discourse, the term invandrare and related expressions continue to appear.

“[Immigrant] is used in a mostly negative way. It is used to persuade people.”
Respondent 7

The respondents we interviewed raised concerns that “Nowadays, [the media] are zooming in on the negative parts [about immigrants] and they don’t see any positive parts.” Many felt that the word had shifted significantly towards something negative since the start of the refugee “crisis”, and felt that in an election year particularly, associations with the word immigrant in Sweden had “completely changed”. One respondent reflected that in Sweden it used to be a “good thing to immigrate, when Swedish people migrated to America” but observed that “it is not ok when people of colour do it”. The word immigrant has become increasingly associated with those positioned as not belonging, a result of the way it has been continually misused in media and political discourses in both the Swedish context and Western society more broadly.

While in previous years the word invandrare commonly appeared in most political and media discourse, mainstream media and political parties seem more recently to shy away from using this word. However, it continues to be used in compound expressions such as “immigrant-dense suburbs” (invandrartäta områden) which convey negative associations. “Immigrant-dense” is usually used to explain issues such as gang criminality or other problems, reinforcing the
misconception that the problems experienced may be understood as a consequence of the higher share of immigrants in certain areas. The rise of alternative far-right media in Sweden has reinforced this negative association. For example, Swedish far-right publications regularly publish articles about “immigrant gangs”, “immigrant rape”, “criminal immigrants” and “illegal immigrants.” Publications such as this do not avoid the negative baggage of the word like other media outlets, but in fact exploit these negative connotations for political gain.

In the United States of America the word immigrant has almost become synonymous with the idea of illegality due to the regular use of the expression illegal immigrants. This label is regularly shortened to illegals which, worryingly, implies that these human beings are inherently illegal. In Donald Trump’s America immigrant and immigration are increasingly identified with people entering the United States without permission, transforming the idea of an immigrant into something criminal. Cognitive linguist George Lakoff argues that “linguistic framing” - the words we use to discuss something - has significantly shaped the way immigrants and immigration are discussed. Terms such as “immigration reform” imply that there is an urgent problem in need of addressing and position the associated word as the problem, while the continued conflation of border security concerns with people crossing borders paints immigrants as a threat to public safety.

Across the pond, in Great Britain, immigrant is “reserved for politicians and the media to describe people … they don’t like,” writes The Guardian journalist David Marsh. The word immigrant has become toxic from its manipulation in political and media discourse, focusing always on the negatives and problems around immigration. A clear illustration of the dangers of using the words immigrant and immigration in the place of something more openly discriminatory can be observed in the pro-Brexit campaigns in the United Kingdom which manipulated information about immigrants in order to encourage citizens to vote to leave the European Union (EU). The pro-Brexit campaign, spearheaded by the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP), harnessed
xenophobic sentiment and purposefully conflated many of the issues brewing in Britain with the immigrant population. In the weeks following the vote, the media was filled with reports of racist incidents experienced or witnessed, with women having their headscarves pulled from their heads and people perceived as ‘non-British’ - some of whom were third and fourth generation migrants - accosted in the streets and told “It’s time for you to leave.” In a Channel 4 News video, an EU referendum voter leaving the polls tells journalists that he voted for Brexit to “stop immigration [...] to stop Muslims from coming into this country [...] from Africa, Syria, Iraq, everywhere else.” In this case, immigrant has come to symbolise those who are unwanted and seen as not belonging.

It seems that across the West to be an immigrant has become something intrinsically negative. However, interview respondents in Norrköping informed us that the word immigrant is not as toxic in other parts of the world as it is rarely used as a code word in the way it seems to be in the examples above. When asked about the word immigrant in their countries of origin, the respondents gave interesting answers. As one said, “This is totally new for me that when you say migrant or immigrant you mean black or a certain type of person … because it’s not the same in China”. While a second respondent explained: “We have the word immigrant in [Bangladesh] but … we aren’t taking it as a negative thing ... we are not seeing them as an outsider. This word is very positive to the people of our country ... in Bangla our word for immigrant means “those who live abroad.” Similar ideas were conveyed by a third respondent, from a completely different part of the world: “Brazil is a very unique case as we are a country of immigrants. A very mixed people… I don’t think the word immigrant is used with this bad connotation, I would say it’s more nationalities or colour that are used. For example, we refer to Haitians or Venezuelans instead of refugees or immigrants.”

The terms used to describe those who immigrate seem to carry specific, albeit often hidden, ethnic and cultural dimensions due to the way they are used and the topics they are associated with. For example, when the Swedish media speaks about “EU-migrants” or “beggars,” the listener or reader will know that Romani people coming from Eastern European EU member states are the subject of focus. Similarly, when the Swedish media speaks about “street kids”, it usually refers to Moroccan youth. Although the ethnicities seem to be hidden, we know who is being talked about. When certain groups are continually discussed in relation to problems,
they come to embody these very problems. Paradoxically, in an effort to avoid obvious and blatant racialisation the negative and prejudicial associations one tries to step away from are being disguised by more socially-acceptable terms.

“**It’s all about how you use [the word immigrant].**”

*Respondent 7*

While the word *immigrant* has been distorted in certain media and political discourses, our respondents tell us that when engaging with people in real life the meaning behind *immigrant* is dependent on “the tone and the body language someone uses when they call you an immigrant.” “It’s all about how you use it,” one person says, “It can be used to put you down if it’s with the tone, ‘you don’t know anything, you’re just an immigrant’ whereas ‘oh, you’re an immigrant? You must know multiple languages’ changes the meaning.”

When asked if they were proud to call themselves *immigrants*, respondents presented a variety of positive, negative and neutral feelings towards the word. Some respondents stated that they call themselves *immigrants* as they “felt lost from time to time” or “don’t feel at home,” while others felt that they were in a privileged position, holding “a double background” which, although it led to more “struggling, the struggling gives something other people don’t have.” Another respondent told us that, as an immigrant, she was in both “a receiving and giving context” and another one confirmed being “proud to feel like I belong to two communities.” While some respondents were less happy about being labelled as *immigrants* - as they were forced into this situation, the majority stated that they were proud to be immigrants. Those that felt proud indicated that embracing one’s “immigrant-ness” was critical to deconstructing the distorted and negative images presented in political and media discourse.

“**For me there is no positive or negative of the word.**”

*Respondent 1*

The word *immigrant* itself is not a bad word. Many people are proud to be immigrants and to say that *immigrant* is a negative word is to ignore the voices of those labelled as such. If we abandon the word we accept its constructed negative associations and ignore the underlying problems related to positioning some people as unwanted outsiders. It is therefore essential to be conscious of how political and media organisations manipulate the term *immigrant*. In cities like Norrköping which are significantly shaped by immigration and immigrants themselves, to counter this negative image is especially important.

*Thank you to the respondents for their openness and willingness to discuss their relationship with the word immigrant.*

References & Further Reading

David Marsh “We deride them as migrants, why not call them people,” 2015, The Guardian online.
High school can be a challenging time for any teen. Besides dealing with questions such as identity, the future, friendships and love, every person carries different stories and backgrounds that may influence their school and life experiences. Interested in knowing how youth perceive migration, inclusion, identity and diversity, we interviewed a heterogeneous group of 12 persons between 15-22 years old, of various backgrounds living in Norrköping. We asked them about their experiences and observations on these themes in schools, sports clubs, and society. Despite having studied a vast field of subjects, ranging from mathematics to fashion, our group of interviewees all shared experiences of the challenges faced by themselves, their classmates, and their friends. Although some of them have encountered difficulties with life in Sweden, we were inspired by their insights, their desire to break down barriers and their willingness to create a more welcoming environment for people in Norrköping.

“Yo u are probably better off with a Swedish name when you’re calling around to people in their 60s and 70s - they are going to respond better to Joakim than to Arman.”

Arman (19)

Most students described their schools as diverse. However, from these interviews it was possible to see how barriers can be inadvertently established and reinforced, resulting in an “us vs. them” attitude amongst different groups of people. These barriers are alienating and perpetuate several forms of discrimination. Some of the main barriers to inclusion and reasons for discrimination emerge from educational structures, language, religion and culture. These issues need to be addressed, as they separate migrant students from the rest of the school, especially newcomers.

One of our interviewees, Sara (22), explained that her high school had a programme aimed at helping non-Swedish speaking students to learn the language. However, this programme spatially segregated the migrant students from the rest of the school, as their classes were located on one particular floor.

This separation prevented students from meeting one another and made it difficult to include newcomers in the school. According to the interviewees, this type of spatial segregation can be seen in neighborhoods such as Hägebys. This in turn causes the isolation of migrants, excluding them from the rest of society.

It is safe to say that language appears to be the biggest barrier. Having “broken Swedish” or an “immigrant accent” can be a challenge, making it difficult for migrants to connect with social groups. Making friends can be even more difficult due to cultural differences. Having moved to Sweden five years ago, Piruz (22) says, “I feel comfortable
“When you are forced from your home in a war, then you come to Sweden, and you have nothing, no plan, no money, you have a crying child…. Then I think Norrköping should do something a little bit extra, maybe… A home. A home is a big part. A safe place.”

Sara (22)

[speaking Swedish] but I don’t have the confidence to just hang out with a Swedish group because we are two different cultures anyway.”

Amaal (22) moved to Sweden 15 years ago, and brings up the topic of bullying; initially, her lack of Swedish was a problem, but when she learnt it and became fluent, this too was a cause for bullying “You sound very intellectual, and that was the reason also why people always picked on me, because they were expecting that broken Swedish or that lack of knowledge in some areas, and they didn’t get that.”

Misconceptions and a lack of knowledge about certain religions also leads to exclusion. Amaal said: “My barrier was also that I was wearing the hijab at that time, so I was a practicing Muslim, and that made it harder for people to connect with me.” She frequently had to defend her religion in school. We believe that racism and discrimination should be taken more seriously, especially in school since it is the basis of education and character-building. Every student should feel comfortable and safe in this space.

The impact that stereotypes and “us vs. them” attitudes have on students was a recurring theme. In competitive environments, such as schools and sports clubs, high performing migrants may be rejected. Elsa (19) recalled a migrant student new to her school, who had really good grades. However, he was ostracised by his classmates’ misconceptions of migrants. Eventually, the student transferred to a new school because of the difficulties.

Our interviews indicated that migrants and/or people with a migrant background may
feel more comfortable with those who share similar experiences, languages or cultures. This creates a sense of familiarity. Maxamed (16) said that it’s hard to be friends with people when “they don’t understand each other”.

“We need to stop looking at how people look and start to get to know them, I guess – just ask questions first, before you point fingers.” Elsa (19)

Some might say that what makes a person Swedish is their citizenship. However, when asked “what makes a person Swedish” or “what is Swedishness”, our youths’ responses were more directed towards culture and self-identity rather than physical appearance or legal status. For the majority of our interviewees, being Swedish means being an active member in society, its culture and its traditions – such as Midsummer. Furthermore, “being Swedish” appears to be connected to the desire to make Sweden a better place.

“When you are forced from your home in a war, then you come to Sweden, and you have nothing, no plan, no money, you have a crying child... Then I think Norrköping should do something a little bit extra, maybe... A home. A home is a big part. A safe place.” Sara (22)

If one thing has been made clear through our numerous interviews, it is that high school students in Norrköping are aware of certain boundaries to inclusivity in their schools and social circles. Whether they have experienced these difficulties first hand, or witnessed them from a distance, they all had their ideas as to how the community can help improve the inclusion of migrants. They have observed that while Norrköping has been efficient at taking in refugees, they have failed to provide them with consistent support after their settlement. Elsa discussed her high school’s efforts at welcoming migrants and raising awareness of the conflict in Syria in 2015. The issue, however, was that although the students developed a genuine interest in raising money for incoming refugees, the interest soon died down - the sense of urgency passed, and students went back to their normal lives. She suggests that schools should continue to encourage students to be involved and emphasised that there are still many people fleeing conflict who need support when they arrive and settle in Sweden.

Breaking down barriers and forging cultural understanding is essential for the creation of a cohesive society. Arman (19) said that “if the children are raised in an area where they only see one kind of people, they will be only met with the ideology that they are one group and the Swedes are another”. Sports and other social activities such as church youth groups were also mentioned as being beneficial to bringing people together from all parts of Norrköping.

“I feel much more comfortable right now. It’s good to have diversity in my student accommodation.” Piraz (22)

People move for different reasons – education, love or to seek a better life – and everyone deserves a safe and accepting home. Overall, our interviewees demonstrated a genuine interest in breaking down barriers and creating a more culturally diverse environment. Given proper support, it is our belief that the youth is eager to continue raising awareness of the importance of acceptance and inclusion. Norrköping should use its diversity to benefit society and build a more inclusive community. Because culture and identity are permeable, achieving an accepting society demands changes on the part of both individuals and groups. We should embrace diversity as an exciting feature of our society.
“We need to stop looking at how people look and start to get to know them, I guess – just ask questions first, before you point fingers.”

- Elsa (19)
The news in recent years has been obsessed with the so-called “refugee crisis” and filled with information about the “record-high numbers” of refugees seeking asylum in Europe. Sweden is one of the European countries hosting the most numbers of refugees. Numbers seemed to matter most in the refugee discourse - “Can we afford having refugees?” The public discussion went far beyond the humanitarian duty to help others in need, it became about whether or not a country has the financial resources to host those in need. Hence, let us reverse this trajectory - how can the newly arrived benefit a country’s economy? The intake of refugees has often been, and still is, associated with the idea of a “burden” that would weigh upon a country’s economy. It would “cost too much” for the country to welcome and address refugees’ demands. In this perspective, the state’s budget is seen as one big cake, that could be shared between the different needs of this country. But a national budget is a bit more complex than the sharing of a birthday cake when unexpected guests arrive. In this think piece, we will present some of the effects of the recent refugee intake by Sweden. For that we will mainly focus on the example of the local municipality of Norrköping. We will particularly focus on how the government’s funds that were put in municipalities have permitted an exceptional economic growth at the local and national level.

The trend in the recent successive governments has been to see Sweden’s budget as a big cake that has to be carefully saved for the next day. In this neoliberal rhetoric, government’s investment in welfare (providing its population a certain social security through health care, education, unemployment insurance etc.) is generally seen as an obstacle to the “free market”. This translates in lowering public spending to a minimum, through successive austerity measures. What is really interesting here is to see how the intake of refugees has, somehow, convinced the government to massively invest.
This, despite decades of progressive austerity and neoliberal attack on the welfare state. This approach has been quite successful to say the least, even though the government seems reluctant to really acknowledge it - it would question their whole rhetoric around the need to lower public expenses.

To balance its aging population and supply the economy with labour power, Sweden really needs these refugees, and will in fact need much more if it doesn’t want to face big demographic and economic loss in the very near future. How do we share the cake if unexpected guests arrive? Well, we bake additional cakes, which requires more manpower and more ingredients.

In order to get those newly arrived to work, huge public investments were done to accommodate, process administrative formalities, and spread Swedish language etc. These public spending measures took diverse forms, while a good part of them went directly into the budget of municipalities, which permitted them to create a lot of new jobs. Extratjänst, for example, is a support programme organised by the Arbetsförmedlingen, providing a full subvention of wages for up to two years for jobs in both public and private non-profit sectors such as health care, education, etc. It targets people who have been unemployed for a long time, but also addresses the newly arrived on a smaller scale. All funds invested in projects like extratjänst, will directly and indirectly return to the state. People employed under the frame of these jobs will use their salary to buy goods and services, thus directly transferring money to the state in the form of taxes for example, and to private and public companies in general, contributing to the general economic growth.

According to an economic analysis undertaken in 2015 by The National Institute of Economic Research (NIER, a government agency operating under the Ministry of Finance), the influx of refugees into Sweden will affect macroeconomic developments in a positive direction. What are these macroeconomic factors? Employment is one of them and will increase due to a growing labour force - more refugees equals more people. As projected, refugee intake and in-
crease in public expenditures have permitted Sweden to attain unexpectedly high economic growth rates. Employment is increasing, but not for everyone. Last year, Lars Stjernqvist, chairperson of Norrköping’s municipal council, was commenting in Norrköping News about precisely this problem: the last two years Norrköping had experienced a record of 90% growth in job creation, while at the same time, the foreign-born population of the commune had record unemployment rates. The situation is highly similar at the regional and national level.

Earlier we said that “more people means more supply for labour”, correct? But then why is there a high unemployment rate for the foreign-born population? The answer is that there is a time lag. It takes time for new arrivals to become established in the labour market, let alone to set up all things necessary to begin their lives in a new country. As if getting asylum applications to be approved and then acquiring residence permits isn’t already hard enough, additional barriers make it hard for refugees to enter the labour market. The lack of contacts, the long process of learning Swedish along with the overall structural racism makes it particularly difficult. The fact that their qualifications are often not officially recognised by Sweden means that people end up in a situation of ‘deskilling’. This means highly qualified people are pushed to occupy jobs that are less valued by society, as it has already been pointed out by a fellow student in the previous R.E.M.S Publication in 2017.

Contrary to the political discourses on refugees being a burden to the state’s finances - the cake - they prove to be an essential part of Sweden’s economic drive - additional cakes. Unfortunately, refugees are for the moment not benefitting from the growth they have induced. In the wider scheme they represent a much needed commodity for Sweden: a reserve army of labour.

References


Who am I, if everything I identify with is influenced by people I meet, experiences I have, impressions that I get from the outside world.

Who am I? Who is the “I”? Is it not just another performative body filled with ideas of modern(ist) time? I feel trapped between in/authenticity and un/truth.

Is there anything at all that can be said to be defining my real self?

The imagination that things exist in themselves / for themselves / regardless of anything / without being in relation to one another, is an illusion.

In a way, we’re all the same, experiencing the same/similar, only in different ways.

How close to our true selves are the things that we express, think, desire? How true can something ever be?

It is difficult (impossible?) to detect whether what I say, think or want actually is an expression of myself or (only?) coming out of a concept of “myself”. A concept that the “I” has learned to call itself.

I couldn’t, cannot, probably will never be able to detect at what point or to what extent “myself” actually is myself or just a shell filled with ideas that I have been conditioned, told, taught to identify with and think in.

Who would I be without my identity? Who would you be?

We are who we are… Are we?

Esther Valentina Kraler
Questions of identity accompany us throughout our lives. They touch upon the core of society and are heightened when thinking about migration. Answering them can show us that we’re the same even though we’re structurally placed and understood differently in the world which makes us have different experiences. Answering them can also show us that identity is a two-way process – negotiated, hence negotiable, intersecting and shaped through interactions. ‘Interactions’ is the key word here. Our identities are relational, formed through experiences we have with people that we meet in the world. This is what the collaborative activity that was launched on Monday, May 28th outside of Trappan, the student café in Norrköping, aimed to make visible.

The space outside of Trappan is a terrace, a place meant for people to sit and talk, dance and drink, lie down and get some sun, eat or read. It is a space that like every other social space is structured by unspoken norms which shape the rules of behavior and govern our way of being and moving in that space. This influences our perspectives, view points, feelings, identities. The rules of conduct on the terrace were widened by inviting people in Norrköping to write down their thoughts on the ground. On the next page, you will find a few statements and snapshots of the activity which was open for everyone in Norrköping to come by and participate for a week.
"YOU ARE WHAT I THINK YOU ARE."  
"WE ARE DIVIDED"  
"I AM VEGAN"  
"I AM WITH YOU!"  
"YOU ARE LIKE ME"  
"I AM JUST A PART OF THIS WORLD"  
"I AM NOBODY"  
"I AM MOVING"  
"I AM DANCING"  
"WE ARE STUCK"  
"WE ARE FUTURE"  
"WHEN I LOOK @ U, I SEE ONLY MY OWN PERCEPTION OF U"
This initiative opened a physical space to reflect on our connections with each other by bringing thought and action on the same platform. It served as a means to stimulate engagement in society, to make people step out of their daily routine and take a moment to look, smile, participate or be confused. The result was a collection of statements that beautifully showed the relational character and fluidity of identities. The contributions made on the terrace of Trappan suggest a universal identity. Even though they were given from personal and unique perspectives, they all talked about our common existence as human beings.
“If Europe really wants to have a knowledge-based economy, if it wants to play a leading role in innovation and research, if it wants to be competitive in the global economy, it needs to do much more to attract the smartest and the brightest.”

Migration policy continues to be a central issue in political debates. Management of immigration flows persists as one of the most important challenges in Europe, requiring effective and comprehensive strategy designed to regulate migration and facilitate integration. Migration experts have described a “race for talent”, a phenomenon in which actors in Europe’s labour markets compete for highly skilled specialists. They are seen as a tool or even a weapon to win the competition for economic expansion and technological innovation, which makes up one part of global competition between states and businesses. Attracting global talents in order to address labour shortages, as well as promoting positive economic growth and scientific progress, is a priority for the developed industrialised economies which aspire to be competitive actors in the global arena. These actions significantly shape national labour migration policy.

In 2013 the United Nations published the UN World Population Policies report stating that “In recent years, a growing number of countries have adopted policies to attract or facilitate the entry of highly skilled workers and by 2013, Governments of 68 countries out of 172 countries had adopted policies to raise immigration of highly skilled workers” (see Figure 1). Tobias Billström, the former Swedish Minister for Migration and Asylum Policy, in 2009 stated that “Sweden needs to stay competitive in the global competition for labour and improve skilled migration.” Within this framework, the Swedish government has intended to attract non-EU/EEA labour force, including low-skilled and high-skilled workers. However, despite aims to improve and grow Sweden’s intake of high-skilled migrant workers by implementing strategic labour migration policy, personal accounts from individuals experiencing these policies first hand point to a number of cracks in the system.

Figure 1.
‘The percentage of governments that had policies to raise immigration of highly skilled workers has increased from 22 per cent in 2005 to 40 per cent in 2013.’

Highly skilled workers are usually defined as individuals with “a university degree or/and related extensive professional experience in the field”.

Source: UN World Population Policies (2013)
“There are numerous open positions for software engineers and IT specialists in Stockholm, since Swedish employers are in need of such skilled workers. So, I found a new job instantaneously.”
- Sergei Beilin (high-skilled interviewee).

Labour migration policy: An overview
In December 2008, the Swedish Parliament adopted a more open and liberalised labour migration policy towards non-EU/EEA migrant workers, aiming to decrease labour shortage and to facilitate labour migration in response to employers’ needs. Henceforth, it was determined that employers would be increasingly responsible for recognising and acting upon the recruitment needs of the industry and businesses, which would positively impact on the national market.

Under the EU Community System of Preference priority access to job opportunities to the Swedish residents/citizens and EU/EEA citizens is still valid. Job opportunities are to be advertised in the European Job Mobility Portal (EURES) by employers for 10 days and in cases where there are no EU/EEA candidates for the position within the prescribed period, the position can be given to a non-EU/EEA worker. The updated Swedish labour migration model requires the terms of employment - including insurance and salary - to be ensured by employers in compliance with collective agreements (kollektivavtal) or accepted practice within an occupation. Subsequently, applications are processed by the Swedish Migration Board depending on employment offers.

Under labour migration regulations, work permits are usually granted for the duration of employment and are linked to a specific employer for two years, and to an occupation for four years. A change of employer or occupation within the restriction period requires the migrant worker to file a new work permit application. In the case that a migrant worker is fired or chooses to change their place of work, they are given three months to find other employment.

The aim of the 2008 labour migration reform: “The individual employer best knows the recruitment needs of his/her business. An employer who is not able to meet his/her labour needs through recruitment in Sweden, in other EU/EEA countries or Switzerland is able to recruit workers from a third country.” - Ministry of Justice, 2009.
“My daughter speaks Swedish better than our native language (Persian).”
- Ali Omumi.

**Sweden is my choice: The case of Ali Omumi**

Ali Omumi, 38, is a mechanical engineer from Iran, who came to Sweden with his wife and daughter in July 2015. Holding a degree in engineering, Ali worked in “multi-level marketing and entrepreneurship”, and has developed considerable experience in the energy sector. Ali and his family decided to move to Sweden to seek better opportunities for the future of their family. “First I chose Norway, but then I changed it to Sweden.”

In December 2016, after almost a year and a half of working in a startup IT company, Ali changed employer, transferring to the engineering sector, submitting a new permit application to the Migration Agency. Later, he joined another well-established engineering company and updated his pending application, which was not processed until December 2017. Once his previous permit had expired, Ali and his family could not leave the country and were forced to wait.

In December 2017, Ali received the rejection decision from the Swedish Migration Board, stating that he lacked proper insurance for his first three weeks in Sweden and did not have health insurance (sjukförsäkring) with his first employer. In accordance with migration regulations, in the case of the work permit extensions, the Migration Agency checks the permit conditions of each of the employee’s previous work permit periods, including salary and insurance requirements. Due to a minor mistake related to the first work permit, Ali’s application for a permit with his new employer was rejected, though all the relevant requirements were in compliance with the rules at that time. Within this framework, Ali and his family had either three weeks to appeal, or four weeks to leave the country, i.e. to be expelled. Consequently, they appealed their decision and received a rejection from the Migrationsdomstolen in May 2018. Ali and his lawyer are currently preparing documents to lodge another appeal within the prescribed period of time. However, even if he is not able to stay in Sweden, he will stay with his current employer who has already offered him a position within the company. “The first thought was that I am done with Sweden and I am not going to pay taxes to the same government again, because if I leave I will lose these three years. But my daughter plays a key role here. She is basically Swedish. It will be a big stress for her to change the environment and to learn a new language again.”

“In the case of an application for an extension of a work permit, the Migration Agency checks that the conditions for a work permit have been met during the periods of validity of each of the prospective employee’s previous work permit periods. For applications to be complete, the employee needs to submit documents that show that salary and insurance requirements have been met for each month you have held a work permit in Sweden.”
- Migrationsverket.

“All persons living and working in Sweden are insured. Sweden has a statutory social insurance scheme. 90 percent of all employees in Sweden are also covered by collectively agreed insurance policies. If you are one of them, you will be insured via your job.”
- AFA Försäkring

“In the process of waiting, my old permit had expired and I could not attend working meetings, even in Copenhagen, while living so close.”
- Ali Omumi.

“We have everything here, in Sweden, and do not want to lose everything.”
- Ali Omumi.
“I like Sweden and Swedes, I would prefer to stay here. I feel comfortable and calm in this environment.” - Sergei Beilin

Sweden is my choice: The case of Sergei Beilin

Sergei Beilin, 42, is a software developer, engineer and researcher from the Russian Federation. He has a Master’s and a PhD degree in Mathematics and has worked in academia for 15 years. “I was interested in mathematics and engineering since childhood.” At some stage Sergei and his wife decided to expand their professional horizons - that’s when he found his first job in Sweden. “I had employment opportunities in Germany, but I chose Sweden for a number of reasons, including my deep interest in Scandinavia, Sweden and its culture.”

After going through the bureaucratic runaround obtaining a working permit, the family came to Sweden four years ago, in May 2014. “I did not deal with my working permit application process, since my employer cooperated with an intermediary company knowledgeable about this process and responsible for arranging all related actions. My employer and I just had to send our POAs (Power of Attorney) to that company and that was all.” Sergei stayed with his first employer for almost a year and applied for a new work permit in March 2015, due to the change of employer. The second employer also cooperated with an intermediary organization dealing with all administrative matters related to the working permit process, which is a common practice. After only four weeks Sergei finally received a new permit and started his employment at the company, where he has been working for more than three years. In March 2017, Sergei applied for the extension of his permit and was confident that everything would go smoothly. “My employer and I were sure that I had all necessary insurance protection and met all the requirements.” Furthermore, when applying for a new second permit in March 2015 and being checked with his previous work permit history, the Swedish Migration Board approved the application and issued a positive decision. Despite this, Sergei received the rejection to his extension application in November 2017, due to a lack of insurance from his first employer. “I was shocked, since I did not even know that I did not carry that insurance.” In December 2017, Sergei appealed his case and is still waiting for the decision from the Migrationsdomstolen. Sergei’s current employer fully supports him and wants him to stay with the company; however, due to a minor mistake the family is at risk of being expelled from the country. “We intended to get a permanent residence permit. It provides its holders with many opportunities while living in the country. Currently we are renting an apartment, but we would like to buy an accommodation. However, without a permanent residence permit it is insecure to invest and plan for future.”

Sergei speaks Swedish and knows much about Swedish culture. “I learnt Swedish almost by myself. But thanks to my colleagues at work I started to speak. It was the best integration process.” In August, his daughter, who is six, is going to a förskoleklass (school). ‘My daughter identifies herself as Swedish and speaks Swedish, living here for almost four years. She has Swedish friends and all her life is in Sweden.”

“Buying a one-way airplane ticket is very symbolic for a family, who stayed at the same place for the whole life.” - Sergei Beilin

“The employer’s obligation is to take out collectively agreed insurance. Employers who are members of the Confederation of Swedish Enterprise through the membership of an employers’ association are required, as a rule, to take out insurance for their employees under current collective agreements.” - Svenskt Näringsliv.
“International exchange of knowledge and talented professionals promote better innovation and scientific progress both at national, but also at global levels.”  
- Sergei Beilin

Labour migration policy: privilege of stay or expulsion

According to the 2018 report from the World Economic Forum, Sweden, along with South Korea, are two of the most innovative countries in the world. Hence, following the actual need for highly skilled specialists, Sweden has recently become one of the most attractive EU countries for skilled workers, including the sectors of IT and engineering. As illustrated in Table 1 showing the statistics on working permits granted between 2015 and 2018, those considered to be ‘specialists’ and ‘technicians’ and ‘associate professionals’ receive the majority of permits. Moreover, according to the Migration Agency data, the largest occupational group granted residence permits in 2017 (non-EU/EEA workers) were IT architects, system developers and test leaders, corresponding to approximately 26% of the total amount of granted work permits.

It is generally considered that highly skilled labour migrants are privileged mobile professionals, with comprehensive rights and advantages. In the UN World Population Policies report from 2013, it was stated that “highly skilled migrants are usually granted preferential treatment and are subject to fewer restrictions regarding admission, length of stay, change of employment and admission of family members than other immigrants”. Though this seems to indicate job security, in practice these

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of work</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Specialists</td>
<td>4,751</td>
<td>5,326</td>
<td>6,235</td>
<td>2,253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technicians and</td>
<td>4,672</td>
<td>3,916</td>
<td>4,586</td>
<td>2,878</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>associate professionals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>13,313</td>
<td>12,526</td>
<td>15,552</td>
<td>7,138</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data source: Swedish Migration Agency (Migrationsverket).

Collective agreements (kollektivavtal): first appeared in the end of the 19th century, collective agreements became main protesting tools of the Swedish trade unions, transformed into Swedish Unions within Industry by 1996. Collective agreements prescribe the terms of employment, including working hours, conditions of payment, form of employment and etc., determined between the trade unions and employers. Almost 90% of Swedish workers are protected by the collective agreements forming the basis of the ‘Swedish unionized Model’.

The Swedish Migration Board is an administrative state agency responsible for migration issues, including residence and work permits, reception of asylum seekers, visas and citizenship, as well as returns to countries of origin and repatriation.

workers are not fully protected in terms of their living and working conditions. Their situation is often commodified and precarious due to their temporary immigration status. When dealing with what are often time-consuming and bureaucratic work permit procedures, these professionals experience insecurities, depending on their employers and on the waiting period for pivotal decisions from the Swedish Migration Board. Moreover, while paying taxes and obeying national laws, these skilled foreign workers and their families still live under precarious and vulnerable conditions, knowing that one day they can be shortly expelled due to some minor administrative mistakes made by their previous employers. As represented in the cases of Ali Omumi and Sergei Beilin, such highly educated specialists

Table 1.
Statistics on working permits granted from 2015 until 2018, differentiated by working areas of interest.
*The data on the year 2018 is provided from January until May.*
“Deporting thousands of workers is comparable to a national disaster. No matter, whether these are waitresses, cleaners, senior managers or engineers, like me. These workers invest in Sweden and losing these workers is a damage for the country.”

- Ali Omumi.

with considerable professional experience are wanted in the EU and Swedish labour markets, and are capable of finding employment promptly and without obstacles. More importantly, these numerous specialists intentionally choose Sweden as a country of residence for their families. They learn the Swedish language and successfully integrate into society. However, Sweden will no longer be able to attract skilled workers under such conditions of insecurity and uncertainty, without providing them with certain guarantees and future prospects. Besides, implementation of the labour migration policy towards non-EU/EEA migrant workers should be analysed and necessary measures duly undertaken. From this perspective the national labour policy approach should focus not only on the attraction but also on the retention of high-skilled migrants. A two-step strategic plan should be implemented: to ‘let labour migrants come’ by adapting to a less rigid migration policy, and to ‘let labour migrants stay’ through the creation of clear and accessible legal pathways to permanent settlement. Without addressing these issues, Sweden will deprive both its employers and broader industry of necessary workers and skills, which does not correspond with the national and regional economic needs. It will negatively affect Sweden’s image as an innovation and technological hub, ultimately causing the country to lose skilled migrants who may choose to pursue opportunities in other OECD countries. There labour migration policies may be less restrictive and more welcoming to highly skilled migrant workers.

Further Readings


SMB (Swedish Migration Board). 2014b. Väntetider för arbetstillstånd

Photos
Sergei Beilin. Photo by Galyna Kutsovska.
Boundaries and Spaces

Mansi Kashatria, Melih Güngör, Joachim Biela & Micha Pollok
How physical boundaries in urban space create new spaces in Norrköping – A visual observation

The action of drawing a boundary to mark a safe, unsafe and exclusive space finds mention in our historic knowledge, cultural consciousness as well as storytelling traditions from around the world. Moving our gaze towards a mythological text of ‘Ramayana’ written in ancient Indian literature in 300 - 500 BC, we know that when Lakshman went out in search of his brother Rama in the forest, he drew a boundary around their home dwelling asking Rama’s wife, Sita not to cross it - for her protection. Consequently, Ravana — the demon king of Lanka who disguises himself as a beggar — provoked Sita to cross that boundary by insisting that for him accepting alms across a boundary was against the free will of donor, but also knowing that the line would burn him if he crossed. This notorious ‘Lakshman Rekha’ (Lakshman Line; as it is known in Hindu culture) is a symbolic example of how the idea of boundary and space-making roots deep in a need to create a secure and exclusive space.

Boundaries, whether they’re noticeable or not, play a crucial part in organising, structuring and regulating public and private life. They can have different appearances and serve different purposes. Socio-economic inequalities, cultural backgrounds and more such disembodied social constructs draw non-physical boundaries through societies. On the other side, physical boundaries and their application in design, architecture and urban planning are tools that visualise and enforce belonging, eventually functioning as a sorting mechanism. In addition, boundaries are extremely personal and subjective. What presents a boundary to some, may not be one to others. A protective element may be perceived as a barrier by others. Age, body size, class and ultimately power decide how and why a boundary is perceived in a certain way.
If I feel I need to separate, protect or secure myself, then that becomes political. Thus, boundaries are in themselves political.

Physical boundaries are especially present in urban space. The high frequency of encounter within a multi-purposed and condensed space of housing, consumerism, education, traffic and leisure activities requires planning of space within a city. The use of physical boundaries for managing and re-defining spaces provokes a question: What is the personal and collective need that the raising of a boundary expresses? In entirely public spaces, one can not necessarily control who to see and meet. Boundaries then provide individuals or groups the possibility to define a selective encounter for themselves. Thus, they have the potential to create new counter-spaces that seem to stand for feelings of control, safety and security. At the same time, they can express exclusion, separation and (non)belonging. In fact, a human body recognises this feeling and the act of stretching a boundary to mark a safe space. It is as inherent as breathing to be alive.
Societies have silently agreed on what makes “my space”, “our space” and “their space”. Individuals also claim public space as “our space” and then move on to mark a personal counter-space enabling selective encounters. Therefore, an everyday life in urban space is a constant journey between and within different spheres of the personal and the public. However, it shouldn’t be understood as a journey between two opposing sides. Rather, it is an interplay, a fluent transition: we need certain boundaries for our comfort and yet we seek the public. The creation of personal counter-spaces seems to be a precondition for allowing open spaces. The expression “to mend one’s fences”, meaning to rectify a damaged relationship, speaks for itself. A city features a variety of boundaries, mostly depending on their appearance, perception and the intended effect. Their types are not the same across the city. But the mechanism behind raising boundaries and creating spaces remains similar: drawing a line and sorting individuals by belonging, entitlement and power. That mechanism doesn’t only work across a city, but it also applies on a much broader scale: the logic of putting up a fence against an expected threat is similar to building a border. Europe’s current dominant discourse and practice on blocking out others from its national frontiers follows exactly that logic.
I want my home to be locked, but I want everything else to be open.

The need of “space-making” is extensively marking the appearance of a city. Boundaries have assortative, regulative and selective effects that are closely connected to power: why does one avoid certain spaces? Architecture and design, with their symbolic power make a person understand that certain spaces are not constructed for the group they belong to, often enforced by fences, locks or blinds. The agency to define this boundary line equals power.
How many boundaries can urban space handle?

A boundary in itself is far from being meaningless and unnecessary. Often, there are coherent reasons for why they are in place. The ideas of territory, space-making, and boundary-drawing have directed the history of mankind across the globe. The omnipresence of physical boundaries is noted but rarely questioned for its purpose, effect and functionality. What is the real intention behind putting up fences, hedges, locks, barbed wire? The visible has become invisible to our observations and considerations. Thus, we take boundaries for granted. The belief that boundaries serve a purpose has developed into a habit, which is continuously being upheld. The collection of pictures for the project “Boundaries and Spaces” picks up these physical objects and symbols in the city of Norrköping and invites one to reflect upon the act and effects of drawing boundaries and spaces. These observations can be placed on a spectrum of intensity, starting with spaces uniquely creating comfort and protectedness, to other spaces demarking territory, belonging and exclusive access all the way to securitisation and surveillance.
HOME  /ˈhɔːm/  (noun)

Where I am myself  Closeness
The ‘right feeling’  My own mess
Memories  Where I invite people
My children  My own little place on earth
Fika time  A social network
Having someone who loves you  Faith
A place to sleep  A small farm house
Smell of newly brewed coffee  Ownership
Rituals  The greens and the blue sky
Belonging  A home country
Anywhere  A second country
Here  Calmness in my heart
A common point between us  Longing
Democracy  Things I’ve created myself
Trees and plants
The notion of home can be so simple and, at the same time, so complicated. A home can be more than just a physical space with various objects placed inside it. It is a way of determining one’s status and belonging in society. However, above all, is the phenomenon of home as an extension of the self and one’s own identity. Although identity is constantly transforming, shaped by various internal and external factors, the values encompassed in the magical word home are ever-present.

To explore this question further, we asked eight people - each coming from different backgrounds and walks of life - to take three photographs that capture what home means to them. From paintings to plants, and pets to pillows, we received a range of intriguing responses. While carrying out interviews we asked the simple question: What is home for you? This question was usually followed by a moment of silence, as if the interviewees were stunned by both the simplicity and complexity of the question. Later, people began to tell us about the things they associated with home – family and the people around them, things they feel attached to, particular activities, memories, and their hopes for the future. This illustrates that home might in fact be a part of one’s identity. The idea of home is embedded in one’s consciousness already starting from early childhood, continually evolving throughout one’s life. When interviewees are asked about their perception of home - and how they feel about it - it is very likely that the question they actually hear is “Who am I?”

Most of us have a very clear idea of what home means to us. However, it can be difficult to put this notion into words. What makes you feel at home? For some, it’s a family member or a beloved pet. For others, it’s a tangible object such as a childhood teddy bear or a regularly-used coffee cup. If it’s not a thing, it might be a feeling - of safety, of comfort, of freedom.
A grandmother of seven talks about the home feeling that she has when she sits by the kitchen table, with freshly-baked cakes that are served together with home-brewed coffee, and family members sitting beside her. We could say that she is actually putting together the core of her identity that she has built up all these years as a mom, a grandmother, and the person the whole family turns to.

Or, when a person who has devoted her career to the pursuit of democracy and the call for freedom thinks of home, it is a place where you possess human rights and live free from threats.

For some people, home is a place of security. One of our interviewees can exercise her freedoms through something as simple as planting a tree in her garden, something she was unable to do back in her former country due to political and economic regulations.

For some, home is not a place present in the now, but figures as an abstract thought that is placed in the future. Here, the now becomes a passage into the future project of home, where a person imagines what their true home should be like. Home as a future project doesn’t take a specific shape, but becomes a destination that is well known in a person’s mind. In this vision, home may give place for the familiarities of a real home. These could be specific things or even personal experiences, such as being a parent.

Memory and future plans of home are yet entangled in the present, and for some this present serves as a two-sided reality of home - now and then. To live between two countries is one example of this, when the memory of home from your first country (whether a garden, or a social community) becomes the thing that makes you feel connected in the country that you moved to.

The repetition and ritual of habits that are done in a place can also affect this notion of home. This may be to drink coffee and read the newspaper every morning at a specific time, where the routine of life may be expressed in a familiar place, sur-
rounded by familiarities of objects. The temporality of home can for some then give a negative effect on the experience of home, as nothing becomes familiar enough and spaces and places change too often to create a sense of belonging.

The notion of time has an important part in the construction of a home. As the space can take a rather abstract form, the idea doesn't necessarily need to be connected to a specific space in the ‘now’ in order to evoke feelings of belonging. Memory, for example, has an interesting way of reconstructing an object into a symbol of nostalgia and affection. A painting or a pillow can create a path between the past and present, and evoke emotions, which could be the feeling of security, that affect the experience of a space or a room that we enter on a daily basis.

The way that people relate to the physical space that they inhabit is another way we form notions of belonging and home. For some of our interviewees, home exists in a very specific location, while for others, home could physically be located anywhere, as long as certain other factors were present.

Control over their physical space was very important for some people: being able to decide how the home looks, who belongs in it, what happens within it, and where you can be yourself and follow your own will. This can be a natural step of maturity, when you move to your own space for the first time, but is not necessarily true in all cases.

One of our respondents reasserted this idea of control when moving into her own apartment at the age of 75, even though she was married. “You have your things and habits. You are well suited in your home. I'm longing for it. To be myself again and do whatever I want.”

The physical space exists as a kind of anchor: a permanent place of familiarity in which you spend a lot of your time. However, familiarity in your broader surroundings can also contribute to the feeling of being at home. This can be anything from

“My family is very important for me, and my family and my children make me feel at home.”
knowing your way around, to the friends you have in your city. Moving to a new place, therefore, can evoke a sense of dislocation - a reminder that you are very much not at home. “I feel at home in the city because of social relationships, I have several people I can interact with, it feels like I have a functioning daily life. That makes me feel comfortable at home in the city. I can go to town and greet people I know.” Your loved ones, your family, your friends, your social network of neighbors, classmates, co-workers, and the people around us are often playing a crucial role in our lives in different ways, especially when it comes to creating the feeling of home.

So how can other people help us to do this? It might be about having a network of people that surrounds you that you feel connected to.

“The common point between me and the others in the context of home is not my language or blood relationship, but it is the sense of understanding each other.”

Maybe you feel secure that you belong to something. “My family is very important for me, and my family and my children make me feel at home.” To feel at home it can be important to have people close to you: friends and family that you can talk to and who really understand you, and neighbours that you can just have a small chat with to create the feeling of home. “We really like it here in the collective house and in the whole area. It’s great and nice to live here. And a lot of wonderful people here. It’s fun and there’s always a lot of activities we can do together. So you get company and can hang out with other people.”

Home is often about being together with the people that you love. But what happens when you cannot be with your people? Sometimes your things become a symbol for the people that you do not have close by.
Maybe they passed away or you do not live in the same city or even the same country.
Home can therefore be a place that connects you to others and to places that you miss. It can be about the porcelain elephants that your late grandfather bought and that your grandmother hated - she was so glad that you wanted to have them. Now you have them in your home and you feel connected to both grandparents. It can also be about smells or gardens or even a specific tree. It links you back to a place that you can so easily find in your heart, but is physically far away from you. Yet the connection is strong. “I feel at home with my things that I live with, they are old things… But everything has memories for me. They mean a lot to me, even if they are not so beautiful. Things are raising memories for me.”

As revealed by our interviews, home is indeed represented by many different things to different people. However, there are also several commonalities that arise, and we gain an understanding into the way people feel at home.
We seek safety and security, inclusion and belonging - in our family, society, or home. “The common point between me and the others in the context of home is not my language or blood relationship, but it is the sense of understanding each other.”

For many people, home is an intangible concept that exists in the heart; for others, a place that can be located anywhere as long as one has the comfort of familiar objects or people. So a question to ask ourselves: if we open ourselves up to different interpretations of home, can we improve the way we include people in our everyday life?

Photos
Khanda Abdulsattar (1,11), Marianne Rosén (9,10)
Sahar Burhan (2), Jānis Bērziņš (3,4)
Julia Powell (7,12), Christina Karlsson (8)
Daniel Grandin (5), Anonymous (6,13)
THE CONTRIBUTORS

Alice Ndabateze
I studied International Relations, specialising in Peace and Conflict Studies. I chose the EMS programme because migration studies has long been my field of interest and such a programme did not exist when I was doing my BA. I was lucky to see that Linköping University was offering it.

Anna Lindström
I have a BA in Swedish and Communication Studies from Mälardalen University. Additional studies on global inequality and mobility made me choose the EMS programme.

Beatrice Bergmark
I have a double BA in Political Science and Semitic languages from Uppsala University. I continued my studies at the LiU master’s programme since it offered studies on migration in an interesting range of fields.

Bediz Büke İren Yıldızca
I studied Sociology and Social Policy at Middle East Technical University in Turkey. Before coming to REMESO, I had been working for 4 years in the humanitarian field under one of the well-known international organisations in Turkey. My engagement with humanitarian crises increased my interest on the subject and I wanted to enhance my academic background for better understanding of the global and local problems in relation to ethnicity and migration.
Celina Ortega Soto:
I have a Bachelor’s degree in Culture, Society and Media from Linköping University. I chose EMS because of my interests in post-colonial studies and in identity, inclusion and segregation.

Christy Patavali
I have a background in Sociology with a focus on Criminology from Panteion University in Athens. Since then, I have been volunteering in Athens and working with migrants and refugees at the borders of Greece and my interest around this topic made me apply to the EMS programme.

Emma Axinder
Before EMS I studied Society and Culture Analysis at Linköping University. I chose to continue my education at REMESO because I wanted to expand my intersectional perspective and deepen my knowledge on how different power dimensions affect us in daily life.

Esther V. Kraler
My motivation to study Ethnic and Migration Studies is to tackle the unspoken, to shed light on how who we are and what we do is influenced by structural and personal realities and to support alternative possibilities of being/feeling in the world. Before coming to REMESO, I completed my BA in Transcultural Communication at the University of Vienna.

Fega Francis Ikpogwi
I studied Linguistics at the University of Calabar in Nigeria and I'm currently reading my master's in EMS. I chose to read this course because it inspires me to be of service to humanity.

Frida Larsson Taghizadeh
With a passion for languages and writing, I hold a BA from Uppsala University with Turkic Languages as the main subject. Born and raised in Norrköping, but having spent much of recent years abroad, I returned to my home city 2017. Particularly attracted to the interdisciplinary profile of the programme, integrating the humanities and the social sciences, I enrolled as a student in the Master's in Ethnic and Migration Studies. I wish to combine my knowledge of languages with my interest in cultural and political issues, preferably as a researcher.

Gabriela Giannattasio Nobres
I have my Bachelor’s in International Relations from UFRJ, Brazil. I chose EMS because the programme seemed unique and well-structured, and I was attracted by its interdisciplinary nature that covers different interests of mine.

Galyna Kutsovska
I hold a BA and a MA with honors in Philology from the V.N. Karazin Kharkiv National University in Ukraine, majoring in French and English languages and literature. My academic interests include the field of ethnicity, mainly nationalism, citizenship, identity, minorities and diaspora, but also the field of migration, in particular labour migration. These research interests, as well as my personal background and international experience motivated me to start the EMS programme at Linköping University.
Hannah Atkins
I majored in English and Politics for my Bachelor's, and completed my Honours in International Relations. I chose the EMS course because I really liked the interdisciplinary nature of the programme, and the diverse range of topics covered.

Holly McCarthy
I moved to Sweden from Australia to better understand how power structures, language, and the history of colonialism underpin the Australian government’s harsh immigration policies. I hold a BA in History and International Politics from the University of Melbourne and have spent several years working alongside people seeking asylum in the Australian refugee sector.

Jenia Rahman
I have completed my Bachelor's in Law at the National University, Bangladesh and later completed post-graduation in TESOL from BRAC University. My interest to work with the marginalised in society for justice, and my passion to preserve human rights and to work with international law has inspired me to study Ethnicity and Migration in Linköping University.

Jessica Petersson Berge
I formerly studied Social work. I chose EMS because I wanted to get a more comprehensive view of migration and the creation of borders in and between societies.

Joachim Biela
I did a Bachelor's degree in Sociology at the University of Lille 1 in France. I chose Ethnic and Migration Studies to deepen my knowledge around these concepts.

Kisya Freisleben
I studied Economics and English Studies at Technische Universität Darmstadt. I wanted to continue my studies with EMS because the programme embraces diversity.

Lemi Caner Saridal
I did my Bachelor's degree in Sociology at Hacettepe University in Ankara. I chose this programme because I wanted to continue my studies in the same line with sociology, and do good in the future.

Mansi Kashatria
I'm a post-graduate in Development Studies with a focus on rural livelihoods from Azim Premji University, India. When not studying, I can be found chasing clouds and squirrels.

Melih Ilker Güngör
I have a Bachelor's degree in History from Middle East Technical University, with a dissertation on the Ottoman Emigration to the “New World” between 1820-1918. My main focus is diaspora studies along with ethnic relations.

Micha Pollok
I previously studied European Studies at the University of Passau, with a special focus on human geography, intercultural communication and foreign languages. I am especially interested in creative activism, urban and rural spaces, border regimes and outdoor activities around Norrköping and elsewhere in the world.

Pearl Agbenyezi
I was a civil servant and a gender activist with the programmes and projects divisions of the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection of Ghana. As a municipal director of the departments of Women and Children - Kpando Municipal Assembly - I worked at mainstreaming gender at the national and
This year we, the students of the EMS programme, formed a committee called the EMS Community. The EMS Community represents the interests of Ethnic and Migration Studies students and promotes social and cultural activities. A main aim of the EMS Community is to build relationships between the programme, its students and the Norrköping community more broadly. It is our belief that community engagement and collaboration benefits both students and the municipality. If you are interested in knowing more about us, please visit our website: http://emscommunity.wordpress.com

Rachel Bulgach
I got my Bachelor’s degree in Russian Language and Culture at the University of Minnesota. I am studying Ethnic and Migration Studies at LiU because I want to find a job where I can help migrants and refugees while also living in and learning more about Sweden.

Renāte Vītoliņa
I hold a Master’s degree in Legal Translation and have seven years experience working with foreign affairs issues at Ventspils City Council, Latvia. Being a migrant myself and experiencing migration related issues, I wanted to explore this field and applied for the programme in Ethnic and Migration Studies. My research interests are related to labour migration, migrants’ rights and socio-economic welfare.

Samineh Asri
I graduated from the Art University in Iran with a Bachelor's degree in Fine Art (sculpture). Academically, I am interested in Social Dominance theory and Nationalism, particularly in the Middle East. My ambition is to join forces with existing migration professionals in Sweden and thereby to contribute to the progress of their multicultural projects.

Sourav Chakraborty
I am from Bangladesh. I have a BA and MA in English Literature from Shahjalal University of Science and Technology. After completing those studies I felt interested to work with migrants and to know how ethnic identity works in case of migration. When I was looking for further study abroad I found this programme suited my interests. So, I applied and fortunately got admitted to this program. I am happy to be here.

Zhihe Bai
I previously studied Swedish Language in Beijing Foreign Studies University, China. Friends call me Helena because it’s easy to pronounce. I chose EMS because the course is located in Norrköping.
As people move and migrate, what used to be local also becomes global. This is as true for Norrköping as for many other places in today’s world. How many languages are spoken in the city’s streets and squares, in its apartments and workplaces? How many nations co-exist? How many identities, experiences and stories? And how are these identities and backgrounds layered in hierarchies of privilege and deprivation?

This report comes from students who study migration and ethnicity at Campus Norrköping. The authors themselves make up a global team, with backgrounds in at least five continents. What they share – in addition to being young, smart and sharp-sighted – is a common interest in how migration transforms the world, and how ethnic boundaries are dissolved or recreated in this transformation.

The old industrial landscape of Norrköping that has received several generations of immigrants over the centuries today houses academic programmes and research groups linked to Linköping University. One of these environments is the Institute for Research in Migration, Ethnicity and Society, REMESO, at the Department of Social and Welfare Studies (Institutionen för samhälls- och välfärdsstudies).

REMESO is an internationally renowned center for research and education in migration and ethnic relations. We study problems of immediate societal relevance: labour and refugee migration, integration of migrants, migrants’ access to citizenship, discrimination, nationalism and racism, EU migration and asylum policy. Norrköping, with its long history of multicultural encounters, is an ideal setting for such research.

The collective that has authored this report are students in REMESO’s international Master’s Programme in Ethnic and Migration Studies. They complete a broad and demanding two-year program taught in English. At the end of the first year, we give the students a difficult task: to analyse and portray how migration and ethnic relations shape the social, economic and cultural life of Norrköping, and to complete this task from idea to finished report within the brief span of five weeks. The students decide collectively and independently how to tackle the assignment.

This report is the result of their efforts: a choir of voices, a mosaic of portraits and ideas, which show how immigrants struggle to make this city their home, and how these struggles make the city a richer, more diverse and interesting place.

Each year, a new class of master’s students produces a new report with a new content, and each new class will approach our local and regional landscape of migration and ethnicity from a new perspective. The reports are issued in a series: “REMS – Reports from the MA Program in Ethnic and Migration Studies”. This is one of the ways in which we train students to identify and resolve key problems related to migration, integration and diversity. This is also how Linköping University and REMESO seek to make research and education useful to a larger audience.

Norrköping Through the Eyes of its Migrants (and its Students)

Words from the teachers at REMESO

Researchers and teachers at REMESO, Linköping University

STEFAN JONSSON
Programme Director

MARTIN KLINTHÄLL
Course Director
Master’s programme in Ethnic and Migration Studies 120 hp

Addressing some of the most challenging issues in today’s world, this programme relates ethnicity and migration to global economic and cultural change, as well as to systems of domination and movements of resistance.

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