Housing and Migration

Immigrant Housing Policy as the Beginning and the End of a Successful Establishment for Asylum-seekers and Refugees

Simon Imner

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Supervisor: Bo Malmberg
Department of Human Geography
Stockholm University
SE-106 91 Stockholm / Sweden
Abstract
Due to a steady increase in the number of asylum seekers in Sweden over the past few years, the topic of immigration has generated increased attention. As a consequence, the political parties have recently presented a range of policy changes. Several of the policy proposals addressed the current housing situation for asylum seekers and refugees.

The aim of this master’s thesis is to highlight the areas of asylum immigration policy and housing policy, in an attempt to reveal overlaps and interrelationships which influence the establishment of asylum seekers and refugees in their host society. By using a comparative discourse analysis, the thesis investigates the concepts of migration and domestic immigrant policies in a European context, focusing on Italy, the United Kingdom and Denmark. This is followed by an in-depth study of Sweden. The Swedish perspective is enriched by qualitative expert interviews and statistical data on migration and housing.

The results from the gathered research emphasises the great influence of domestic housing policies have on asylum seekers and refugees’ establishment. Each analysed country has structural barriers that restrict asylum seekers and refugees from becoming established on the housing market. These policy barriers operate on different governance levels, which mutually affect each other. In turn, this situation complicates a holistic approach to create an effective immigrant housing policy.


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1. Introduction

Forced migration is not a new phenomenon. In fact, the movement of refugees as a result of war, conquest and political brawl is as old as human history (Castles 2003:17). Primarily, international migration concerns the territorial autonomy of nation states, defined by individuals crossing nations’ borders touching on social and geographical boundaries. (Caponio & Borkert 2010:9). However, an occurrence within forced migration is rather new, which is the increased amount of migrating people. Between 1960 and 2000, the overall global stock of immigrants increased by significant numbers, from 92 million to 165 million (Collier 2013:50p). This has undoubtedly created an increased awareness and an ongoing, let alone tense, multifaceted discussion on the advantages and disadvantages of migration and globalisation.

Much of today’s practicalities related to migration are maintained through local governance. In a European context, this has put an increased pressure on various municipalities to find pragmatic solutions to deal with the consequential issues related to migration (Caponio & Borkert 2010:9; Lidén & Nyhlén 2014:547). One of these pragmatic solutions is the provision of housing. Housing, together with employment and education, is essential to facilitate a successful establishment of an individual in a new society. However, the policy discourse on the establishment of asylum-seekers and refugees have generally addressed the crucial connection to a well-functioning domestic labour market, thus failing to recognise housing as “a central element of social reproduction that shapes the employability of migrants and the conditions of their working lives” (Samers 2010:163).

During recent years in Sweden, the political focus on the housing market’s “outsiders” generally have concerned the importance of creating housing opportunities for young adults and students, recognising the possible obstacles they face when attempting to move from parental homes or unsuitable accommodations in order to follow employment or education opportunities. The issue of minority ethnic households’ exclusion from housing is indeed a recurring topic of discussion. According to Anderson and Sim, this exclusion holds three dimensions: first, exclusion may occur as a result of an insufficient accessibility to or understanding of the housing system that is linked to certain levels of language and knowledge; second, housing may be of an unsuitable size or location to the household; and third, how minorities deal with the overwhelming thresholds for gaining access, such as financial reasons (Anderson & Sim 2000:98). As I hope to describe in this thesis, a possible fourth dimension can be added to this palette of exclusion, namely: policies that explicitly do not aim, but still manages to hamper asylum-seekers’ and refugees’ ability to obtain housing on equal terms as the majority population of the host-society.
Table 1 shows the media exposure of two separate combinations of keywords relating to either (graph 1) labour and migration or (graph 2) housing and migration per month in Sweden between the period of August 2010 and April 2015\(^1\). The graphs show a clear relation in media exposure for both combinations, even though the media coverage of labour and migration is significantly larger than the coverage of housing and migration. However, the trends on both combinations are steadily increasing during this period. The peaks shown by graph 1 can possibly be a result of the general election in September 2010 and the general election in September 2014. However, the peak in February and March is not explicitly connected to an increase in press coverage during an election. This peak might partly be explained by a controversial statement from the Minister of Migration during exactly this period. In this comparison, the second graph (2) on housing and migration appears mellow. However, a peak in December, January, February and March is notable. This recent peak is particularly interesting as the background relevance for this thesis.

During the winter of late 2014 and early 2015, several policy proposals were presented by a number of political parties in Parliament. The proposals were often claimed to improve integration of immigrants in Sweden, and several of them were directed to the housing situation for immigrants as a group.\(^2\) During this period, the Christian Democrats proposed an abolishment of the EBO act\(^3\) and construction of modular housing units (Kristdemokraterna 2015). This was followed by the Liberal Party, who suggested a stricter, as in fewer exceptions, family migration, making it possible only when the person living in Sweden has arranged housing, employment and a steady income (Björklund et al, Folkpartiet 2015). Shortly after, the Center Party entered the debate, proposing the following selection of policies: that the first accommodation should be guaranteed as part of the municipal receiving; the construction of temporary

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1 For an explanation on the keywords used, please see Appendix 4. Table data.
2 This paragraph describes the proposals and debate concerning housing policy in Sweden.
3 The right for asylum-seekers to choose their own accommodation. This will be further explained in the following sections.
modular housing units to facilitate the municipal receiving; that a free-market rent setting will facilitate an increased building of rental dwellings (Centerpartiet 2015). Around the same time, the Moderate Party proposed stricter family migration similar to the previous proposal from the Liberal Party (Johan Forsell, Moderaterna 2015). As a counteraction to these proposals, the newly formed government (currently a coalition between the Social Democratic Party and the Green Party) responded by presenting their starting point for future reforms (Löfvén et al 2015). In their joint debate article, they stressed the importance of actions to facilitate the construction of housing for young adults, students and newly arrived immigrants in the parts of the country where job opportunities are good. The government also declared the importance in making all municipalities contribute in the reception, as well as the key role of the non-profit sector in the establishment process. Later in early 2015, the Moderate Party presented additional proposals, suggesting that the County Administrative Boards, instead of the Public Employment Board, should be responsible for newly arrived immigrants’ residences. In addition, the Moderate Party suggested an increase in the states’ responsibilities for the newly arrived (from two to three years) and a stricter procurement for asylum accommodations (Moderaterna 2015).

**Aim and purpose**

Based on the context from the previous section, it becomes possible to state the following hypothesis: *housing and immigration are interrelated*. Therefore, the aim of this thesis becomes to particularly discover how this relationship affects the pursuit of establishing asylum-seekers and refugees within a receiving country’s domestic housing market. In particular, this thesis aims to examine the existing relationship between housing integration policies in Sweden, focusing on asylum-seekers and refugees’ conditions on the Swedish housing market. This poses the following research questions:

How are immigrant and housing policies connected to each other, and how do they relate to immigration policy? What similarities and differences can be found across Europe? What are the current policy proposals that aim to facilitate asylum-seekers’ and refugees’ establishment on the housing market in Sweden? Finally (and maybe most importantly), in what way and to what extent may housing policy influence immigrant policy?

The purpose is to study and compare immigration, immigrant and housing policies that affect the establishment of asylum-seekers and refugees in order to find out if the structure and purpose of one policy might have unintentional effects that influence the purpose of another. The main focus is set to Sweden, whose policies on migration and housing will be compared to a European context. In addition, the Swedish and European context will be compared to Italy, the United Kingdom and Denmark, focusing on finding comparable immigrant and housing policies for asylum-seekers and refugees within each country. The study of these countries is mainly motivated by their comparability of immigrant policies with the main subject of study. Denmark is studied because of their similar general welfare system and their geographical relation as a neighbouring Nordic country. Italy is also chosen because of their geographical location - as one of the windows to Europe and their part of recent severe economic and socially dimensioned crises. The United Kingdom is chosen because of their separation of social rights for asylum-seekers and refugees. Within the initial consideration of choosing countries, it soon became evident that Sweden and Denmark in relation to Italy and the United Kingdom have different approaches to the comprehensibility of the welfare
states. Finally, all of these countries are chosen because of their state membership in the European Union, which eases the comparison within the European Union context.

I attempt to link the two separate fields of migration and housing by conducting six separate interviews with experts active within separate parts of these two fields in Sweden, posing questions and discussing on themes that are expected to overlap both topics. These experts are stakeholders active within either advocacy or management of Swedish immigrant and housing policy.

Three angles are used in the approach to understand this complex research topic: first, the scientific literature; second, the comparative analysis between countries; and third, the expert interviews. By describing the different stakeholders’ views on the possible overlapping of migration and housing policies, I attempt to analyse the current policy debate in Sweden, which in turn may serve as a background material to a possible upcoming policy debate on housing for asylum-seekers and refugees. In addition, the material can serve as a foundation for further analyses on different perspectives of reality and moral values that frames the discourse of a particular policy.

Disposition
In order to provide a comprehensive overview of the complex interdisciplinary topic of immigrant housing policy, I will use the following structure to describe the main points of this thesis. Since multiple different backgrounds are needed to explain this issue, the otherwise traditional background outline is divided and framed into two separate perspectives. These perspectives are described in the sections Concepts and The comparative study, and also serve as the main results of the literature research.

The first background section, Concepts, explains the important theories of migration and forced migration. It also attempts to clarify the different views and definitions of asylum-seekers and refugees. Moreover, the different principles of citizenship are compared, followed by a brief introduction to the ideas of the welfare state and the distinctions between social and public housing. This section compares the conceptual interpretations of assimilation, integration and similar terms like multiculturalism, separation and marginalisation. These central concepts are crucial in understanding why people migrate, and how immigrants and host-societies are interrelated. Finally, this section elaborates on how the studied concepts take form in the context of this thesis.

This is followed by a methodology section, Method, which describes and motivates the research design used in this thesis: a comparative discourse analysis made out of a set of qualitative interviews and a comprehensive literature research. In order to find a suitable framework that supports these methods, emphasis is mainly on the theoretical approach. It poses a tailored description and discussion on the strengths and weaknesses of a qualitative approach, as well as the possible challenges in using this research method. This section also approaches the discussion on qualitative interviews and the use of interview guides. It reflects on the use of information from expert interviews, and how this information could be interpreted by the researcher, as well as the ethics surrounding qualitative interviews as a method. Finally, this section reflects on the limitations surrounding this thesis.

The second background section, The comparative study, describes how immigration and immigrant policies are related in a European perspective, followed by a comparison on
domestic housing and immigrant policies between Italy, the United Kingdom and Denmark. Finally, this section provides an in-depth study of immigration policy, immigrant policy and housing policy in Sweden.

The section The Interview study connects the results gathered from each of the expert interviews. The structure of this section is to combine the informants’ different answers to a question or a theme from the each interview. The structure of each discussion theme is transcribed and translated, in order to be written as a simulation of a joint conversation on each topic. Every answer by a certain informant is cited using their surname, the year when the interview took place, followed by a number that represents where in Appendix 3 – Interview transcriptions their answer can be found (e.g. Holmgren 2015:1). A separate sub-section describes the informant’s reactions to some of the current policy proposals made by the political parties in Sweden.

The section Analysis and discussion attempts to connect the previous sections in order to create a comprehensive discussion on the results gathered from the literature study, the comparisons between countries, and the results from the interviews. The focus of the discussion is on the Swedish context, which also serves as the analytical basis. Furthermore, the analysis connects the results with additional theories that might be used to explain the phenomenon within its context.

The Conclusion sums up the research findings and states the possible use of the thesis. As it is my aim to have a critical approach to the subject, this perspective will be imbued within all of the sections, rather than having it in a separate one.

The Appendices provides: (1.) data on the media exposure of migration and housing related to migration and labour (2.) a short description of the organisation or agency that each of the informants claim to represent; (3.) the interview guide that was used as a questionnaire and for themes for discussion, (4.) The original transcription of each interview, as well as information on the informant and the dates when the interviews were conducted and reconciled; and (5) a presentation of the data used in the tables.
2. Concepts

In this section, the important theories of migration and forced migration will be examined, in an attempt to clarify the different views and definitions surrounding asylum-seekers and refugees. Moreover, the different principles of citizenship are compared, followed by a brief introduction to the ideas of the welfare state and the distinctions between social and public housing. Finally, this section compares the conceptual interpretations of assimilation, integration and similar terms like multiculturalism, separation and marginalisation. These central concepts become crucial in understanding why people migrate, and how immigrants and host-societies are interrelated. Finally, this section elaborates how the studied concepts take form in the context of this thesis.

Migration

The concept of migration contains many interpretations, and there does not seem to be consensus in who counts as an immigrant and a migrant. In the studied literature on migration several researchers study this concept through different angles. Samers argues that several global institutions refer to international migrants as individuals who reside somewhere else than in their country of origin for more than three months (Samers 2010:325). In other words, this sort of three-month rule and the global institutions that Samers refers to could be a product of international unilateral, bilateral and multilateral agreements, such as the regulations concerning visas or passports, or the freedom of movement for citizens within the member states of the European Union. According to Goldscheider, migration involves the detachment from the organisation of activities at one place and the total round of activities to another place (Goldscheider 1971:64). John Weeks stresses the importance of spatiality, explaining the definition of migration as being a permanent change in residence, and argues that somebody can’t be a migrant unless they leave their space (Weeks, 2007:264). By using these suggested general definitions on migration, it becomes apparent that the actual concept of migration has to be put in a context of both time and space in order to find an increased understanding of the concept. However, this context time and space could further increase the complexity of the concept. Weeks (2007) and Samers (2010) use the distinction between internal and international migration. Samers argues that “internal migration involves those who move within their own countries, for example from rural to urban areas”, whereas international migration is “the act of moving across international boundaries from a country of origin (or country of emigration) to take up residence in a country of destination (or country of immigration)” (Samers 2010:9p). On the other hand, Weeks claims that internal migration traditionally has been thought of as voluntary, in the sense that people are free to choose to migrate or not and that these decisions are primarily based on economic factors. On the contrary, international migration usually is regarded being voluntary, […] “but it typically means that a person has met fairly stringent entrance requirements, is entering without documents (which carries a load of stress with it), or is being granted refugee status, fleeing from a political, social or military conflict” (Weeks 2007:265). Ruhs and Chang explain voluntary migration as being probably possible for most labour migrants, as “rational and fully informed migrants would not migrate (or would return home), if there were no (more) net gains from moving to (or staying in) the receiving country” (Ruhs & Chang, 2004:80).4 Today

4 Despite the fact that internal and domestic migration is an important aspect which in many levels correlates with international migration and the theme of this thesis subject (O’Reilly 2012:1), it will not
there are six general trends within contemporary migration, according to Castles and Miller: first, the globalisation of migration; second, the acceleration of migration; third, the differentiation of migration; fourth, the feminisation of migration; fifth, the growing politicisation of migration; and sixth, the proliferation of migration (Castles & Miller 2009:10pp). These trends, which are also recognised by Samers (2010) and the OECD (2014), explains the increase in both immigration and emigration across the globe, all with different purposes, as well as the increased rate of people migrating, the increased share of women migrating also the political tensions that might occur as a result of migration.

**Forced migration**
The context of globalisation and increased competition may theoretically provide an increased understanding for the incentives of economic migration. However, it does not give an adequate explanation to the phenomenon of forced migration. Castles argues that the answer to this question consists of two mechanisms: first, globalisation is a component of selective inclusion and exclusion which uphold and deteriorate inequalities between specific areas and groups of individuals, rather than a system of equitable participation; second, this system creates a blurred picture which further complicates the distinction between forced and economic migration (Castles 2003:16p).

A common, yet simplified, classification is made through a distinction between the voluntary and the forced migration, where the former might suggest a connection to labour or family migration and the latter suggests associations with war, poverty or climate change. Castles identifies the categories of forced migration as including refugees and asylum-seekers, internal and development-induced displacement, trafficking and exiles (Castles 2003:15). As the trend of a growing politicisation of migration becomes more and more clear, possibly even more in combination with general elections and humanitarian catastrophes related to migration, it becomes crucial understand the underlying factors that makes people seek asylum, as well as their abilities to do so. In *International Migration and Social Theory* (2012:129pp), Karen O’Reilly elaborates that forced migration is not a flow separated from other forms of migration, as forced migrants may be moving back and forth, they may be transnational, they may or may not settle down, and there may well have been an element of choice, a lifestyle ambition or a work related reason. In addition, Samers argues that despite the fact that a distinction between forced and voluntary migration provides some academic grounds for discussing the different modes of entry, making a complete separation is difficult, as forced migration might be a result of poverty or low wages might be considered voluntary labour migration in another context (Samers 2010:11). So to what extent should voluntary and forced migration be separated? Many asylum-seekers may have various reasons for their mobility, which makes it unmanageable to separate economic incentives from human rights motivations. This so called “asylum-migration nexus” is still being aspired through bureaucratic classifications (Castles 2003:17).

However, the concept of forced migration has a clear connection to one of the basic theories within migration research, namely the *push-pull theory*. This theory, which originates from Ravenstein’s widely recognised laws of migration (Ravenstein 1885:198p), can be described as a set of factors that drives migration through pulling migrants from a geographical area and/or pulls migrants to another area, such as a
country or a region. Some examples of push factors are rapid increases in population growth, inequality (such as poverty), political repression, war or an environmental crisis. At the other end of the theory, pull factors can be distinguished as job opportunities or higher living standards. Despite the push-pull theory being more than 130 years old, and has been endlessly academically twisted and turned during this time, it can still be seen as of relevance today. However, there are several factors that can’t easily be explained or generalised with this basic factor, such as adventure-seeking younger migrants (cf. Goss & Lindquist 1995). Another perspective on the push-pull factors is the feminisation of migration. Despite the recognition that women tend to migrate to a greater extent than men, and concluded by Ravenstein (1885:198p) as one of the laws of migration, there has been a recognised dominant male bias within the 20th century migration research. This bias was based on the general assumption that women, like children, followed men as involuntary companions with family reunification as the reason for migrating (O’Reilly 2012:58). As gender aware researchers increasingly became interested in motives for female migration, combined with the increased notion of women migrating to a greater extent, the assumption of women’s motives for migration have generally changed (Castles & Miller 2009:12; Samers 2010:20; O’Reilly 2012:59). Therefore, the push-pull theory could be considered being originally adapted to mainly analyse push factors from a poor country and pull factors to a rich country.

**The asylum-seeker and the refugee**

The common definitions of asylum-seekers and refugees are mostly confused. An asylum-seeker is a migrant who enters a country, either by legal or “illegal” means, and then requests asylum (Samers 2010:11p, 322). An asylum-seeker might also be someone who claims to be a refugee, but whose claim is yet to be validated (UNHCR 2015). A person may request asylum from outside of a country, thus entering the country as an asylum-seeker. Later the person may or may not be granted asylum or refugee status by the national government (Samers 2010:322). The government’s decision is based on their interpretation of the 1951 Geneva Convention and the succeeding 1967 protocol (ICRC 1994).

According to Article 1 in the Geneva Convention, a refugee is someone who is unable or unwilling to return to their country of origin owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion (UN General Assembly 1950; UNHCR 2010:3). If a migrant fears the risk of harm or persecution upon returning to the country of origin, the individual is entitled to the countries who are signatories to the Convention (Samers 2010:323), which at present time are all states within the European Union as well as Norway, Iceland and Switzerland (Regeringen 2014). The current version, the Dublin III Regulation provides the EU member states with a legal basis to establish the criteria and mechanisms for determining which member state is responsible for handling an asylum application from a third country or a stateless individual (EU No 604/2013). This is a mechanism commonly known as the Dublin procedure. The regulation includes the country of first asylum principle, which means that a person fleeing persecution in their home country may seek refuge in the first safe country where the opportunity is given. Simultaneously, this principle prohibits the individual to request asylum in more than one member state (Regeringen 2014).
Indeed, the considerate decision on an asylum application is a difficult task. Reneman argues that the task of evaluating fear of persecution and future risk of harm poses a unique challenge that requires both delicate communicative methods and objective risk management, especially since most cases of asylum requests suffer from lack of documentary evidence (Reneman 2014:2). Another important discussion concerns those who cross international borders without being detected by authorities – the undocumented migrants. Rather than using the other common terms to describe this group (such as illegal, unauthorised, clandestine, undocumented etc.) using *undocumented* doesn’t suggest that these individuals are outside the law (cf. Cohen 2003, Samers 2010). It might be reasonable to describe a complex mechanism that is the asylum system as ineffective and unfair. The United Nations High Commissioner of Refugees (UNHCR) recognises the asylum system as the complex phenomenon it is. However, they argue that if an asylum system is both effective and just, individuals who know that they are not refugees will not have the incentives to claim to be refugees. Thus, the UNHCR recognises that the asylum system in this sense might benefit both the host country and the emigration country (UNHCR 2015). The recognised abusing of the asylum system is also recognised by Paul Collier. However, Collier argues that the asylum system is not created to provide economic benefits for the indigenous population, but instead: “by helping the most stressed societies, the high-income societies retain their self-respect” (Collier 2013: 263). Despite the complexity of this topic, this reasoning might provide incentives for keeping and improving the current asylum system.

**Citizenship**

Becoming a citizen is a crucial element in the establishment process. Citizenship is mainly described as a formal legal status (e.g. nationality) which defines the membership of a nation-state (Castles & Miller 2009:268). The content of different citizenships varies. It can generally be described as including variations of civil, social, linguistic, cultural and political rights. In turn, these rights can be translated to a great variety of liberties, such as the right to vote, the right to a fair trial, the right to free speech, the right to free movement, the right to social welfare et cetera. However, immigrants sometimes acquire forms of *denizenship* or *quasi-citizenship*. These statuses regard only some of the rights of citizenship (cf. Hammar 1990). These are glooms of legality within the political, cultural, economic and social rights which occur in countries where the length of residence can provide access to some, but not all, rights of the citizen in the same country.

There are three important foundations on which the principles of citizenship are built upon, which can be said are competing against each other. These three are *jus sanguinis*, *jus soli* and *jus domicili*. *Jus sanguinis*, literally the right of blood, is the principle based on decent from a national of the concerned country (Castles & Miller 2009:269), which usually is based on the origin of an individual’s parents (Samers 2010:325). Italy and Sweden is among the handful of European countries that offer rights to ethnic citizens by the principle of *jus sanguinis*. *Jus soli*, literally the right of soil, is the principle where the acquisition of citizenship is based on the migrant’s, or the parents of the migrants, place of birth. Denmark and the United Kingdom is one of the few European countries that use the principle of *jus soli*, due to their nation-state like incorporation of

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5 For further reading on the concept of citizenship and rights, please see Marshall (1950).
According to Castles and Miller, all modern states have rules of citizenship that are founded on combinations of jus sanguinis and jus soli, while the first or the second might be predominant (Castles & Miller 2009:269). The third principle of citizenship, *jus domicili* is based in the length of time the migrant has resided in the host country. This principle is often connected to certain requirements on the immigrant, such as an uninterrupted residence in the host country and that this person is not convicted of crime (Samers 2010:325). This principle is also available in Sweden.

**The welfare state**

The concepts of the welfare state is a research topic that have been devoted many years of interdisciplinary research. In an attempt to better understand the concept of the welfare state, it can be put in relation to the night-watchman states, law-and-order states, militarist states or totalitarian states (Esping-Andersen 1990:1). In the recognised work of Gösta Esping-Andersen, and his classifications of welfare regimes, the welfare state is a phenomenon within the history of capitalist societies, where the previously named state concepts are now national institutions fixated with the making and supply of social well-being (ibid). Sweden is identified as the type of welfare state that favours a strong public service sector that provides welfare goods to the families in need. Housing as a welfare good has traditionally been looked upon as a crucial element if the Swedish welfare state, which can be characterised by the aim of neutrality between tenures and a ‘unitary’ rental system (Andersson et al 2010:17). Similar to Sweden, Denmark qualifies for what can be regarded as a Nordic welfare state, described by Skifter Andersen (2010) as being characterised by: a comprehensiveness of social policy; a strong state involvement; a high degree of universalism; a high degree of de-commodification and de-familisation through social policies; well-established gender equality policies; a high level of social service provision; social rights based on citizenship; uniformity of service provisions; municipal responsibilities for provision and partly financing of services; mainly tax financed benefits; active labour market policy making; and finally, a strong political and popular support of the Nordic welfare state and universalism (Skifter Andersen 2010:81). In the other end, Italy is commonly regarded as an underdeveloped welfare system, characterised by “weak statehood, strong reliance on family and acquaintances for child care and services for elderly people, and by a prevalence of passive policies over active ones in tackling high unemployment rates” (Baglioni & Mota 2013:325).

**Assimilation and integration**

It is recognised by Michael Samers that the term *assimilation* at least has three meanings. First, that immigrants acclimatises to the ideas or practises of a dominant culture over time; second, that immigrants receive an equal socio-economic status compared to some sort of average of indigenous population; and third, that immigrants cultivate a spatial pattern, such as residence and employment, that is similar to one or more dominant cultural groups (Samers 2010:322). Paul Collier describes assimilation as being beneficial not only for the indigenous population but for everyone, despite the idea that the concept is politically unfashionable, meaning that it still is consistent with the golden rule of treating others as you would wish to be treated. Collier claims that there is no ethical reason that a migrant admitted to a receiving country should not be expected to learn the local language, meaning the convenience of sharing the same language improves the conditions for a common politics (Collier 2013:98).
Similar to assimilation, *integration* can have several meanings and interpretations. According to Cvetkovic, the distinction between integration and assimilation is that “integration means a certain degree of identification with the dominant group, at the same time as the original culture is maintained, while assimilation means a complete disassociation from the original culture” (Cvetkovic 2009:111p). This interpretation is recognised by Samers, who presents two additional meanings: The first is closer to assimilation, referring to the extent to which migrants fit into a form of idealised and imagined conception of dominant practices and values of the citizen majority, or to their access to material goods such as housing, employment, health and education; the second, where immigrants retain ‘their culture’ while at the same time joining the “liberal political culture of a western liberal democracy” (Samers 2010:324). Samers second interpretation of integration can be recognised as similar to the definition of *multiculturalism*. Multiculturalism as a form of fusion can be described as being ethically well based, as it presupposes an equal dignity between the migrant and the indigenous as well as an excitement and creativity behind cultural blending rather than the contrasting hierarchical relationships of assimilation (Samers 2010:99). Two related terms are *separation*, which occurs when every immigrants’ efforts are focused on preserving their original culture, at the same time avoiding contact with the dominant culture; and *marginalisation*, which occurs when the immigrants lose interest in either preserving the original culture or adopting the new culture (Cvetkovic 2009:111p).

**Social and public housing**

In their comprehensive work on social housing in Europe, Scanlon and Whitehead (2007) recognise that there is no formal definition of social housing. The definitions vary, but mainly relate to the form of ownership, who constructs the dwellings, whether or not rents are below market levels, the relevant funding or subsidy, and most importantly: the purpose for which the housing is provided (Scanlon & Whitehead 2007:8). This recognition naturally provides difficulties in comparing countries through figures, as it is dependent on the prerequisites of each country. In the general context of this thesis, *social housing* refers to rental housing managed by governmental or non-profit agencies with the overall policy aim to provide affordable housing for households outside of the regular supply-and-demand driven housing market. In relation, *public housing* refers to rental housing managed by the local authorities, through municipally housing companies, with the overall policy aim to provide a rental housing alternative to everyone who might request it. In relation to the perspective of this thesis context, it can be said as social housing generally target specific groups on the housing market, while public housing has a general aim of housing provision without targeting certain groups.

**Contextual concepts**

In understanding the many different interpretations of the concepts surrounding the scientific literature of the migration discourse, it becomes crucial to elucidate how these concepts take form within the frame of the thesis subject.

It appears as the terms migrant-immigrant and migration-immigration have wide definitions within different research fields, and the classification is made in the eye of the beholder and in the context of which the beholder are found within. Maybe too often, the beholder’s context does not coincide with the individuals directly part of these concepts. One distinction between the terms could be that a migrant suggests a more
temporary residence while an immigrant suggests a more permanent one. In this thesis, I chose to use these terms interchangeably. In addition, this thesis does not elaborate on the concepts of emigration, as asylum-seekers’ (including refugees’) immigration to Sweden is the main focus. However, emigration is generally included within the term migration. For an even wider discussion on conceptual confusions, see Samers (2010) and O’Reilly (2012).

When examining a country’s policies surrounding migration, a distinction should be made between immigrant policy and immigration policy (cf. Dell’Olio 2004). Immigration policies address the ideas of whom and how many that should be able to immigrate to the host society, as in regulations and debates over family migration and immigration flow. Immigrant policies address the ideas of what should be done about the effects of immigration upon the host society, such as whether immigrants should be entitled welfare and access to public housing. Despite being closely related, these two distinctions are crucial to always have in mind as two branches within what is commonly named migration policy.

The multifaceted dimensions and overlapping meanings within terms like integration and assimilation might indeed cause conceptual confusions depending on the context. Also, the usage of these terms may sway in popularity. It is recognised that these terms are interpreted differently in different contexts, such as the political, the academic and the “everyday” contexts. As it comes to discussing immigrants’ abilities to become part of the host society, regardless of the immigrants’ adaption to the host society or the host society’s adaption to the individuals’ circumstances as cause of immigration, neither integration nor assimilation might be a sufficient term to describe this process. In an attempt to depoliticise the process, I will use the term establishment, as in becoming established in a society. In doing this, I aim to deviate from possible underlying ideological ideas on bears the main responsibility for an immigrants’ establishment within a society. Therefore, I identify establishment on the housing market as part of being established within the host society.
3. Method
This section describes and motivates the research design used in this thesis. It reflects on comparative analysis and qualitative expert interviews as a method of use. In order to find a suitable framework that supports these methods, emphasis is first to describe the theoretical approach and second how this approach is implemented. Furthermore, this section poses a tailored description and discussion on the strengths and weaknesses of a qualitative approach, as well as a discussion regarding the possible challenges in using this research method with interview guides. Finally, it reflects on the use of information from expert interviews, and how this information could be interpreted by the researcher, as well as the ethics surrounding qualitative interviews as a method.

Methodology and research design
A research design is the frame that sets the boundaries for the gathering and analysis of data. The selection of research design becomes the researcher’s statement on which dimensions and aspects of the research that is to be prioritised. Here, these dimensions and aspects are reflected in the causal connections between variables, in the generalisation of a group of individuals that have not actually taken part in the research, in the understanding of different behaviours and purpose of different actors within different contexts and the estimation of social phenomena over time and in the connections between them (Bryman 2011:48). The choice of a qualitative research design is motivated by the aim to understand different behaviours and the social phenomena within a specific field of study through the context which they are part of. In addition, the topic of the study and the posted research questions inquire for a qualitative approach. The general concept of using qualitative methods is described by Brannen as “patterns of inter-relationships between a previously unspecified set of concepts, as observed through a wide lens” (Brannen 1992:4). In addition, Hantaris describes the most fundamental characteristic of qualitative research as being its commitment to viewing events, actions, norms and values through the eyes of the people that are being studied (Hantrais 2014:134). The descriptions of the qualitative research as made by Brannen and Hantaris will serve as a basis for the theoretical approach, and will embodied through using the proven methods of discourse analysis and comparative research design.

According to Potter, the discourse analysis can be described as a method that puts emphasis in how different versions of the world, the society, events and inner psychological realities are produced within discourses (Potter 1997:146). On the other hand, Bryman argues that the discourse analysis is a more flexible method in relation to conversation analysis as it puts less weight on naturally occurring conversations; it may be applied on texts (such as news articles) and it encourages the verbal interaction in an interview (Bryman 2011:474). Furthermore, Bryman describes the discourse analysis as having two distinctive traits; first, it is anti-realistic, meaning that there is a denial of an external reality waiting to get its final description and explanation by the researchers, because of the notion that the researchers cannot come up with a privileged explanation of the aspects of the reality being studied; second, it is socially constructed, meaning that emphasis is put on the versions of reality as expressed by the members of the studied environment and their interpretations of it (Bryman 2011:474p). The discourse analysis will imbue the whole thesis. However, it will especially focus on the expert interviews and their interpretations of different themes within the subject of the thesis.
I have chosen a comparative research design to study the different policy proposals that aim to improve the establishment for asylum-seekers before and after the receiving of a residence permit. This research design is suitable for comparing contrasting subjects through identical methods as it provides the conditions for a better understanding social phenomena and is possible to implement through qualitative and quantitative approaches (Bryman 2011:80). An important note here is that the limitations of using a comparative research design might be found in the actual focus point of the topic per se. A systematic analysis of something as diffuse and circumstantial as a social phenomenon obliges the researcher to scrape upon basically every topic related to the studied topic, and also reveals the epistemological problem of asymmetrical understanding (e.g. Fay 1996). This is a significant challenge to researchers within every discipline and level as it obliges the researcher to use a strict limitation for the study. Azarian argues that the limitation of comparative research is found within its context. It becomes relevant to ask ourselves the following question: “To what extent is it possible for a researcher to penetrate into a different context, get acquainted with the universe of meaning pertinent to that context and acquire the relevant insights that are sufficiently deep to put him or her in the position of comparing the unfamiliar worlds of others with his or her own?” (Azarian 2011:122). Despite the challenges facing the comparative researcher when the subject field spans over related research fields, this makes the comparative research design especially interesting, as it might provide new angles to seemingly jammed policy discourses. Another relevant critique of using comparative methodology when analysing separate countries, is the interdependence between the countries and how they expectedly affect each other. This is commonly referred to as Galton’s problem (cf. Denk 2002:77). Galton’s problem questions the foundation of comparative research: that every country is an independent case (Rose 1991:459p). As globalisation and institutional collaborations between countries reduces their independence, this becomes crucial to understand when comparing countries within the European Union. In order to reduce the deficiency recognised by Galton’s problem, I have attempted to describe the asylum, refugee and housing issue through a European Union context.

When it comes to ensuring the quality of the qualitative research, the researcher naturally faces the issue of how the final results of the research should and could be treated. The difficulty surrounding this question seems to stem from the tendency to judge qualitative research by quantitative standards (McCracken 1988:48p). McCracken states that the following traits are important to notice in the qualitative method as compared to a quantitative: first, that categories take shape during the course of research instead of being fixed from the beginning; second, that the analyst uses his or her methods to illuminate the complexity and patterns of interrelationship between various categories instead of a fixed set of categories; third, that it is designed to produce testimonies from the respondent that can be difficult to articulate instead of asking precisely answerable questions; fourth, that the researcher is an instrument of investigation instead of being a intentionally detached operator of a standardised methodological machinery; fifth and finally, that the qualitative tradition aim to offer a glimpse of assumptions and categories that otherwise might be hidden from view, instead of aiming to capture issues of generalisation and distribution (McCracken 1988:49). The intention of the qualitative research is to explore what people think and how they act, rather than how many people think something and how many of them act.
Interviews

The qualitative research design used in this thesis is implemented through semi-structured interviews. According to Dalen, the semi-structural form is focused on a pre-agreed topic which is included in a thorough interview guide consisting of central themes and questions with the purpose of covering the most important parts of the studied topic (Dalen 2007:31). The interview guide is presented in Appendix 2. As noted by Bryman, the performance of a semi-structured interview gives the informant a generous availability to formulate their answers within the researchers presented interview guide (Bryman 2011:414p). However, it also becomes important for the interviewer to direct the informant to the main theme of the conversation if it starts to drift to far from the interviewer’s original intention.

Early in the research process it is advisable to make a selection of which informants that should be included in an interview study. The selection requires the researcher to have both insight and competence in the research field and the phenomenon desired to study. Monica Dalen argues that the researcher with lesser experience can ‘check out’ the field of research in order to achieve certain insights on what is to be studied (Dalen 2007:56). In order to find relevant stakeholders to interview, I formulated the following criteria for selection: Government agency in Sweden currently involved with housing or immigrant policy; and Swedish associations or think-thanks involved within advocacy or management of housing or immigrant policy, preferably engaged in the general debate during 2014 and/or 2015. The results are found in Table 2, which consists of the organisation or government agency interviewed, at which the interview took place and the name of the informant. A closer description of the interviewed organisations and governance agencies are found in Appendix 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Organisation/Government agency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>February 9th 2015</td>
<td>Karin Perols</td>
<td>The Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>February 11th 2015</td>
<td>Ida Holmgren</td>
<td>The Swedish Red Cross</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>February 13th 2015</td>
<td>Anders Sjelvgren</td>
<td>The Swedish National Board of Housing, Building and Planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>February 17th 2015</td>
<td>Anna Rehnwall,</td>
<td>FORES – Forum for Reforms, Entrepreneurship and Sustainability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Andreas Bergström</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>February 19th 2015</td>
<td>Malin Sahlén</td>
<td>Timbro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>February 26th 2015</td>
<td>Annelie Rostedt</td>
<td>The County Administrative Board of Stockholm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Projects that use interview as a method for research require an interview guide (Dalen 2007:31). I sent my preliminary questions in advance to each informant, between five and seven days before each interview was to take place. By doing this I gave the informants the opportunity to prepare their answers, which in turn might have resulted in enriched responses. During the interview it is vital that the interviewer takes time in order for the informant to talk, as these answers are the researcher’s most important data (Dalen 2007:39). Before the interviews began the informants were given two options on
which method of documentation that they preferred. The first option was that I would audio record the interview, as recommended by Dalen (2007:33, 65). The second option was that I would take notes during the interview, transcribe the notes and then reconcile with the informant. Every informant chose the second option. The disadvantage of the second option is naturally that the researcher does not capture every word being said during the interview, which might exclude some interesting data findings. However, I argue that the advantages of the second option are that it gives the informants the ability to talk more freely and also to intervene if they experience themselves being misunderstood during the interview.

Before the interviews took place, the informants were informed that the interviews weren’t anonymous. They were also notified that I as a researcher would not use direct quotes in the transcription. However, I would transcribe and retype their answers. When the retyping was completed, the transcribed document was sent to the concerned informant, who was able to correct their reasoning if they were of the opinion that I as a researcher had misinterpreted their answers or if the answers were incomplete. Each of the transcriptions was accepted with only minor changes or corrections from the informants (Appendix 3).

As noted earlier, these interviews were made in an early stage of the data collection with the aim to get insight in the current discourses within the migration-housing policy overlap. As the project progressed and a deeper understanding was made, thus the interview guide might have had a different form if the interviews would be performed in a later stage. Finally, the interviews was performed and documented in Swedish, and then translated and interpreted in English. An important disclaimer, that I stress the reader to have in mind, is that the translations and subsequent analysis of the interview results is the researcher’s interpretations of the collected data from the interviews. The original transcriptions of the interviews are written in Swedish. It is also the Swedish transcriptions that have been reconciled with the informants.

**The expert interview**

The obvious purpose of interviewing experts is to gather the specific knowledge and to scan the general debate on immigration and establishment through housing. In *Interviewing Experts*, Bogner, Littig and Metz states that interviewing experts in the exploratory phase of a project is a relatively efficient and concentrated method of gathering data in relation to methods such as participatory observations or systematic quantitative surveys:

> “Conducting expert interviews can serve to shorten time-consuming data gathering processes, particularly if the experts are seen as ‘crystallisation points’ for practical insider knowledge that are interviewed as surrogates for a wider circle of players” (Bogner et al 2009:2).

Furthermore, the authors argue that expert interviews also lend themselves to those kinds of situations which it might prove difficult or impossible to gain access to a particular social field (Bogner et al 2009:2). In every interview, the informants gave me suggestions on other key persons of interest for my research subject. Some of them directed me to informants which I already had been in contact with, which strengthened the relevance of interviewing these persons. Number 1, 2, 3 and 4 in Table 2 was endorsed by other experts. Pfadenhauer argues that the researcher must be sceptical
about the suitability of the expert interview as an instrument for the ascertainment and analysis of strategies and relevance to the topic (Pfadenhauer 2009:81). There is a possible pitfall for the researcher in failing to determine if an answer from the expert is their own opinion, the official standpoint of the stakeholder or a generally accepted hypothesis outside of the expert’s field. During the introduction phase of the interviews, I attempted to clarify to the interviewee that the option of declining to answer a question is possible if it is out of range from the expert’s field of specialisation.

**Limitations**

A broader research study would naturally favour a wider selection of interviews. Due to the predetermined frame of time and resources, six informants were chosen. As a supplement in an extended analysis on this topic, I recommend qualitative interviews with the Swedish Public Employment Service (Arbetsförmedlingen), the Swedish Migration Agency (Migrationsverket), the Ministry of Justice (Justitiedepartementet) and associations like the Immigrant Institute (Immigrantinstitutet), No One Is Illegal (Ingen Människa är Illegal), and Amnesty. Finally, interviewing UNHCR (the United Nations High Commissioner of Refugees) would indeed provide an enriched perspective.

This thesis mainly focuses on the housing situation of asylum-seekers and refugees. There are also several sub-groups that are important to consider in this categorization, such as quota refugees, unaccompanied refugee children, undocumented migrants and family migrants. These sub-groups are undoubtedly important to consider in order to be provided a wider perspective on immigration and immigrant policies. However, the limitations of time and resources framing this thesis led me to conclude that these groups only will be briefly mentioned, even though this study’s results might be applicable on their situation as well. I have deliberately chosen to exclude the mechanisms and policies concerning labour immigration and policies related to employment. This is indeed a crucial area to include in the immigrant policy discourse. However, including this other form of immigration would further blur the delimitations on the topic, thus obstructing the possibilities of finding concrete research results. In addition, it is my opinion that these research studies have occurred to a greater extent than those focusing on asylum immigration and housing.

As the main focus is to approach this issue through a policy perspective, the perception of private stakeholders is limited. Here, the perspectives of the “market” are expected to be highlighted within the interviews with the think-tanks Timbro (free-market) and FORES (green liberal). Indeed, the perspectives given by stakeholders such as property owners, construction companies and businesses involved within the procurement of accommodation centres further would enrich the results, even though it probably would shift the focus from the policy perspective and to market mechanisms.

An important note here is that only a limited set of policies are analysed in this thesis. The focus points are the EBO act (SFS 1994:137), the Establishment act (SFS 2010:197), the act on municipalities’ responsibilities for housing provision (SFS 2000:1383) and the act regulating the conditions of the public housing companies (SFS 2010:879). Obviously, these are not the only policy changes that might affect asylum-seekers and refugees conditions on the housing market. However, the framework of this thesis is limited to these policies, due to limited time and resources. In 2010, a new act
was put in force to facilitate the subletting of tenant owned apartments (SFS 2012:978). This act is not analysed within this thesis. However, I strongly advice further research in the possible effects that this act might have on asylum-seekers and refugees possibilities to request housing.
4. The comparative study

This section serves as the comparative study of four European countries. The main objective here is to compare the domestic housing policies within each country in order to find examples of where the housing situation for asylum-seekers and refugees is addressed. In order to achieve this objective, an understanding of the European Union’s immigration policy must be initially made. Subsequently, the examples of asylum-seekers’ and refugees’ housing situation are sought in Italy, the United Kingdom, Denmark and Sweden. Sweden is the focusing point of this thesis. Therefore, Sweden will serve as the main subject of the in-depth study on immigration, immigrant and housing policy. As will be shown in this comparative section, the host country policies play a crucial role in asylum-seekers and refugees ability to request housing and become established.

Housing for one and housing for all

The housing choice and preferences of immigrants, such as asylum-seekers and refugees, can be expected to be dependent on family situation, economic resources and the possibilities of the local housing market (Skifter Andersen et al 2013:22). Therefore, the housing preferences and choices of ethnic minorities can be expected to be the same (e.g. as heterogeneous) as for other indigenous citizens of the European countries. In order to maximise benefits from governmental commitment, and to minimise costs, it is typical to target the actions towards groups within the society that are considered to be most vulnerable or are in a situation crucial to effect (Qvist 2012:16). Host country policies generally attempt to grasp the mobilisation of social rights, regularisation, residence and work permits, access to services and combatting discrimination through claims-making (Samers 2010:293). On the other hand, the provision of access to good quality accommodation is a multi-faceted process, including many variables that need to correspond, such as administration, political willpower, well-functioning market mechanisms and a large portion of predictability for the host country policies to function. However, it can be argued that some households fail to obtain a suitable accommodation which meets their prioritised needs as well as the aggregated expectations from the society. Many houses are too small or located in the wrong place, too far from family, friends, support networks, places of worship and the rest of the community (Sim 2000:93). Furthermore, there has been a extensive experience of harassment affecting and preventing some minority households from settling in certain areas of towns and cities, which in turn have resulted in concentrations of ethnic minorities in certain neighbourhoods (Sim 2000:93). Another experience is that new households on the housing market are expected to encounter a great many difficulties in trying to obtain affordable shelter (Van der Vlist et al 2011:587, Muellbauer & Murphy 1997:1708p). In order to cope with this situation, the domestic public sectors in European countries are able to facilitate solutions customized for these disadvantaged groups. Another important reflection, caught by Paul Minderhoud (1999) and later recognised by Hans Andersson and Susanna Nilsson (2009), suggests that a restriction of the access to the labour market and to social security has become a somewhat popular instrument to control immigration, as there exist a range of instruments concerning the right to remain within a state. As a result, the right to remain in a state might be on a collision course against the basic principles of the human rights which the majority of states have committed to (Minderhoud 1999:146, Andersson & Nilsson 2009:180). The latter authors’ discussion on Minderhoud’s statement contributes an interesting
reflection. As the instruments to restrict immigrant’s access to social rights, such as the right to housing, this is rarely mentioned explicitly by the government. Thus, Andersson and Nilsson are cautious in drawing any conclusions if this instrument is used intentionally on a structural basis (Andersson & Nilsson 2009:180pp).

It is possible to adopt the generally accepted idea that housing is one of the single most important assets in high-income countries. Housing represents almost half of the entire stock of the world’s tangible assets (Collier 2013:114), and the growth in the supply of housing determines both the price level and the population of a city, meaning that there is a statistical link between the construction of housing and population growth (Glaeser 2011:151p). Furthermore, there is a clear interrelationship between demographics and housing market (Van der Vlist et al. 2011:587). In 1995, Zimmerman noted European migration policy makers often were confronted with the short-run obstacles on the local housing markets as well as the fear of over-use of social security systems and public goods (Zimmerman 1995:48). Given the recognised importance of both housing and immigration, it becomes interesting to investigate this relationship in a European context.

**The European perspective**

According to an UNHCR report on asylum trends, Sweden was by the first half of 2014 by far the largest recipient of asylum applications, accounting for three quarters of all new asylum claims in the Nordic region (UNHCR 2014:8). Put in a comparable European context, the EU countries with the most single recipient of new asylum claims during 2014 was Germany (202 700 applicants), followed by Sweden (81 200), Italy (64 600), France (62 800), and Hungary (42 800) (Eurostat 2015a). If we compare a host society’s population with the registered applications in 2014, the positions as top receiving countries changes. In 2014, the highest rates of registered asylum-applicants were recorded in Sweden (8.4 applicants per thousand inhabitants), followed by Hungary (4.3), Austria (3.3), Malta (3.2), Denmark (2.6) and Germany (2.5); the lowest rates were observed in Portugal, Slovakia and Romania (Eurostat 2015a). Evidently, both the amount of asylum-applications and their number in relation to the indigenous population within host societies varies substantially. In some European countries, 90 per cent of the asylum applications are rejected, yet many former applicants stay on (Castles & Miller 2009:189), while in others, as Sweden, grants residence permits to about 70 per cent of the asylum claims (Eurostat 2014) In total, 45 per cent of the first instance asylum decisions in the European Union resulted in positive outcomes during 2014 (Eurostat 2015b).

A project funded by the European Commission, PROMINSTAT⁷, recognises a widely spread agreement within European scientific literature which verifies the disadvantaged position of immigrants and minority groups on the housing markets (Fonseca, McGarrigle, Esteves 2010:3). The authors of the article speak unison about the importance of housing for minority groups and how the European immigration policies and the member states’ national housing policies are of relevance to each other. This connection is also investigated by Fiorella Dell’Olio, in the article *Immigration and*

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⁶ E.g. grants of refugee or subsidiary protection status, and authorisation to stay for humanitarian reasons.

⁷ *Promoting Comparative Quantitative Research in the Field of Migration and Integration in Europe* (PROMINSTAT) was financed under the Sixth Framework Programme of the European Community.
Immigrant Policy in Italy and the UK: Is Housing Policy a Barrier to a Common Approach towards Immigration in the EU?. Dell’Olio argues that housing is one of the crucial policy areas in determining the integration of immigrants in the host country, although it has been given little attention in the public debate in both national context and EU-context, declaring that the responsibility of housing is a matter of national responsibility and that the Union do not have any direct competence in the area (Dell’Olio 2004:117). In the draft of the European Pact on Immigration and Asylum, it was recognised by the presidency that “poorly managed immigration may disrupt the social cohesion of the countries of destination” and that “the organisation of immigration must consequently take account of Europe's reception capacity in terms of its labour market, housing, and health, education and social services, and protect migrants against possible exploitation by criminal networks” (Council of the European Union 2008).

Despite this similar approach to the issue, Lidén and Nyhlén argue that there still is a lack of a comprehensive general framework that makes the ambition for coordination implemented in the domestic policies (Lidén & Nyhlén 2014:549).

As noted by Ottonelli and Torresi, a part of the common strategy to maximise savings, temporary immigrants tend to favour cheap and shared accommodations. Consequently, this might result in immigrants living under exceptionally sub-standard conditions (Ottonelli & Torresi 2012:210). The expected time of residence is therefore an important variable which can be assumed to apply for both labour immigrants and asylum migration. The access to social housing is varied according to citizenship. Refugees might be provided with rental market vouchers, which unfortunately only make sub-standard housing obtainable, while asylum-seekers and undocumented migrants in general do not have any access to social housing (Samers 2010:163). Asylum-seekers that are unable to arrange their own accommodation can generally be directed to accommodation centres. As argued by Alice Szczepanikova, accommodation centres serve as tools for asylum and refugee migration control, being the embodiment of a country’s asylum and immigrant policies. The centres enable governmental agencies and institutions to control the nature of assistance available to asylum-seekers and refugees, and also the legal aid provided by non-governmental organisations as well as voluntaries (Szczepanikova 2012:130).

The national immigration and integration policies within the EU member states are affected by the parallel developments in other European and neighbouring countries, the policies adopted at Union level and international events (Södergran 2000:13p). In contrast to this, it is by Wiesbrock (2011:49) argued that it is unreasonable to view national integration policies as isolated phenomena. These different perspectives on the policies give indications that they have to be studied in both a regional and national context. Both EU institutions and the member states’ national agencies have come to the conclusion that a successful immigration, meaning a maximisation of economic progress and human capital accumulation, is mainly dependent on integration policies. On the other end the underlying factors of the policy development, a structural cautiousness might be noted. Wiesbrock argues that the increasing fear of terrorist attacks and religious fundamentalism is another factor that further highlights the importance of integration as social cohesion (Wiesbrock 2011:48p). These recognitions have led to the increased notion that the use of national models have ceased being relevant. Instead, it is recognised to a greater extent that integration policies are converging towards becoming assimilation policies (cf. Joppke 2007; Green 2007;
Wiesbrock 2011). The European context together with the influence from the European Union, as well as the multilateral agreements within the member states presents an extra layer of complexity as a comparison between the member states’ immigrant policies are given a closer look.

**Italy**

During the last decades, Italy have experienced an increase in immigration, which in turn have coincided with a persistently high national level unemployment rate, a dramatic decrease in fertility and an exposure to several severe crises especially in the social and economic dimensions (Castles & Miller 2009:111). Simultaneously, there have been a pattern showing that immigrants in generally tend to settle in areas where employment is available, rather than areas with high unemployment (Reyneri 2001 in Castles & Miller 2009:111). The pursuit of housing affordability is recognised as one of the crucial issues within Italy’s housing stock, along with the general need for renovation (Baldini & Poggio 2012:576). Dell’Olio recognises Italy’s housing stock as an of an inappropriate nature, meaning that the housing unit’s size and conditions are unable to accommodate new patterns of poverty and settlement, exemplifying that impoverished migrants tend to fall into homelessness and overcrowding due to the inability to acquire family support (Dell’Olio 2004:119). In general, the rental housing sector in Italy has a high representation of foreign households, and housing allowance and social housing are being increasingly directed towards poor immigrants. (Baldini & Poggio 2012:576). Government policies in Italy have to a small extent encouraged immigrant integration, partly explaining why there are no national legislation directed to covering housing policy for immigrants (Dell’Olio 2004:119). Furthermore, it has been noted that many regions in Italy discriminate immigrants in the social housing stock, ranging from requirements as “residence seniority” and a creation of specific quotas for the share of dwellings that can be accommodated by foreign households (Baldini & Poggio 2012:576). In parallel to this, the Italian government has put more emphasis in delegating responsibilities to non-profit organisations, on the introduction of checks and controls, and simultaneously shifted the policies to a more repressive approach towards illegal immigration and homelessness (Dell’Olio 2004:119p). The issue of discrimination on the housing market is evident. The considerable evidence stems from both racial prejudices and rental market structure, thus creating a distortion which reduces the possibilities to acquire housing. There is also the domestic black rental market, which lets immigrants pay more than the indigenous population while they as tenants consequently enjoy relatively fewer legal rights (Dell’Olio 2004:120). Baldini and Poggio argues that the welfare state should provide better support incomes through transfers directed to housing consumption, thus balancing the supply and demand on the housing market (Baldini & Poggio 2012:576). Although it only constitutes about five per cent of the country’s total housing stock, the public housing sector in Italy is considered being an important intake for immigrants (Dell’Olio 2004:120). The availability and cost of social and rented housing for asylum-seekers, refugees and low-paid immigrants are likely to preoccupy their initial settlement as well as the establishment during subsequent years (Samers 2010:163). In comparison with the United Kingdom, Italy has a weaker relationship between the categorisation and access to social and economic benefits, consisting of a public sector that responds to immigrants’ needs mainly through temporary emergency issues that are not part of any coherent integration strategy (Dell’Olio 2004:124). It is also noted that the
administrative inefficiencies of social housing, is related to the issue that the current transfers are dependent of the limited resources and the insufficient efforts to tackle poverty levels among tenants (Baldini & Poggio 2012:577). As the Italian housing stock currently need increased investments in both maintenance and renovation, the need to keep rental costs for low-income households at an affordable level increases equivalently. Due to a current lack of resources for new investments in the housing sector, the current debate in Italy revolves around the objective to find innovative forms of housing supply through cooperation between governance levels (Baldini & Poggio 2012:577).

United Kingdom
In the United Kingdom, asylum-seekers are not entitled to permanent housing, full welfare benefits or permission to work. In a European Commission country report for the United Kingdom, asylum-seekers and refugees are one of the key immigrant groups when distinguishing the homeless population, along with the indigenous minority ethnic population and other vulnerable groups, such as refused asylum-seekers and undocumented immigrants (Stephens et al 2010:58). As legal immigration to the United Kingdom is very restricted, the main channel of entry is through claiming asylum (Dell’Olio 2004:116). Those who fail to meet the criteria in applying for refugee status may be granted to stay in the United Kingdom, given humanitarian protection or discretionary leave, for a period of up to three years before they may be required to leave with immediate effect (Phillips 2006:540). Thus, people who immigrate to the United Kingdom and have refugee status are exclusively entitled a share of the welfare system, such as the right to work and ability to apply for social housing. However, changes in the Immigration Act in May 2014 introduced changes to the removals and appeals system, making it more convenient to remove people who are not entitled to stay in the country. This reform also made it possible for the state to prevent “illegal immigrants accessing and abusing public services or the labour market” (Home Office 2013).

Compared to Italy and several other southern countries within the European Union, the United Kingdom has a relatively large proportion of social housing within the housing stock (Samers 2010:163). However, the stock of the non-market sector is gradually shrinking, as is the distance to the private market (Dell’Olio 2004:121p) and the waiting lists in order to acquire these accommodations have ranged from several years in the London region to a couple of months in the Northern parts of the country (Samers 2010:163). Dell’Olio recognizes that theoretically, refugees are the only immigrant category that are entitled to housing support, however, the majority of refugees in the United Kingdom do not receive targeted assistance. Furthermore, the government provide no permanent housing solutions for refugees, but are able to fund resettlement programs and provide reception facilities for certain groups of refugees, however, it is rarely the case (Dell’Olio 2004:122).

Today, asylum-seekers in the United Kingdom are considered especially vulnerable to homelessness due to major policy changes in the mid-1990s, mainly the 1993 Asylum and Immigration Appeals Act, which changed the appeals system and restricted the access to social housing (Bloch 2000:78). Despite the political awareness of overcrowding, it is argued that in 2010, no more than 7.5 per cent of the population lived in overcrowded accommodations (Stephens et al 2010:84). The main findings
from this research state that the rate of overcrowding is actually lower among short-term unemployed than it is among employed. However, it is notably higher among long-term unemployed. This poses the reflection that overcrowding might be related to certain households’ situation on the labour market. As asylum-seekers are not entitled to work-permits, this might reveal a link between asylum-seeking, work permits and the number of residents per dwelling.

**Denmark**

Denmark’s housing policy have generally emphasised market control rather than state control, however with similar social objectivities for housing provision (Skifter Andersen et al 2013:27). However, since the Integration Act was put into force in 1999 Denmark now has a strict placement policy for immigrants, which is based on a system which primarily takes into account the share of people of foreign origin in each of the municipalities. According to Myrberg, this practically means that municipalities with a high share of people with foreign background receive a small amount of new immigrants, while those municipalities with a low share receive a larger amount (Myrberg 2012:19p). Furthermore, as the government place a refugee in a certain municipality, the refugee then is obliged to be settled in this municipality for the whole period of integration, which is three years, unless the person finds a job in that motivates moving or another receiving municipality are willing and able to accept a resettlement. However, if a person, during the period of integration, moves from the original municipality without being accepted to a new one, their financial aid from the government is retracted (Myrberg 2012:19p).

In their article *The Special Importance of Housing Policy for Ethnic Minorities: Evidence from a Comparison of Four Nordic Countries*, Skifter Andersen, Magnusson Turner and Søholt (2013) concludes that immigrants’ housing options and experiences of discrimination in Denmark are greatly influenced by price regulations of the private rental market and the absence of transparency in housing transactions, meaning that rent control decreases immigrants possibilities of finding a suitable residence, as rents blow market level generates queues and gives landlords the extended ability to pick their tenants (2013:40), despite the fact that public and social housing consists of about 40 per cent of the total housing stock (ibid 2013:29). Despite this article being a thorough comparative research on the possibilities and constrictions of different tenure forms, the preconditions of refugees and asylum-seekers are not being taken into consideration. As the Danish immigrant policy restricts refugees and asylum-seekers to move between municipalities unconditionally, this can also be expected to affect their ability to request the full range supply of rental housing.

The organisation of social housing in Denmark is administrated through non-profit housing associations. Principally, these associations are private and autonomous entities, however subject to strict regulation and surveillance by local authorities (Skifter Andersen (2010:90a). According to Kathleen Scanlon’s and Hedvig Vestergaard’s comprehensive study on social housing in Denmark, there are several indications showing that municipalities often are unwilling to permit the construction of new social housing, as they do not want “an influx of residents with social problems who will cost them money”, as they rather advocate the construction of special-needs housing, such as dwellings for disabled and elders (Scanlop & Vestergaard 2007:45). Since 1994, Danish municipalities have an expanded mandate in social housing
construction projects. In addition, the rents in social housing are fixed in relation to the income and expenses per household, however the rental levels of older apartments within the social housing stock appears to have difficulties in competing on the housing market as they to a greater extent are vulnerable to deprivation and distress (Skifter Andersen 2010a:90). In Denmark, practically all types of households have access to social housing. Social housing accounts for about a fifth of the domestic housing stock. This accessibility is administrated through waiting lists and individual verdicts depending on the size of the household. The impact of social housing on immigrants’ establishment might be revealed through an analysis on the tenure form that was made in 1994-2002. The result from this study reveals an increase of ethnic minorities in the social housing sector, from 12 per cent to over 20 per cent. This analysis also shows us that this group are not evenly distributed across the social housing associations, as some accommodations only house ethnic Danes while others house more than 50 per cent non-ethnic Danes (Scanlop & Vestergaard 2007:48).

**Sweden**

This subsection serves as an in-depth study of immigration, immigrant and housing policy in Sweden. Here, the time frame is to describe examples of interrelations between these policies between the year 1984 and 2014. The following subsections Immigration and Housing are bridged by a description on the placement policy of asylum-seekers and refugees during the same period.

**Immigration**

One of the main themes within international migration debates is the discussion on whether welfare societies have adequate capacity to handle the consequences of ambitious refugee policies in relation to a public outcry for a fairer ‘burden sharing’ approach among the wealthiest nations, often referring to Sweden as a an example of generous refugee, immigration and integration policies (Valenta & Bunar 2010:464). Sweden also has a long-standing reputation as standing by the universal principles that everyone in theory is entitled to support (Samers 2010:260). This general picture is indeed flattering for Sweden, but is this reputation correct and what lies behind?

According to the Swedish Migration Agency, the Swedish migration policy aims to cover refugee and immigration policies, return, repatriation support and the relationship between migration and establishment (Migrationsverket 2014b). By looking at the history of immigration, it becomes evident that Sweden has a strong tradition of receiving refugees (Schierup 2006:1). In the 1930s, Sweden did a turnaround from being an emigration country to becoming an immigration country and has since then, with the exception of a short period in the 1970s, had a larger annual immigration than emigration (Migrationsverket 2014c). Diane Sainsbury argues that between the 1950s and 1990s, Sweden had a foundation of formal citizenship that came to be seen as discriminatory, but since then there has been a shift from nationality or legal citizenship to length of residence and employment status as the criterion for access to social rights (Sainsbury 2006:238p), the principle of citizenship known as jus domicili. Immigrants received the right to vote and run for office in local and regional elections in 1975 (Bevelander & Pendakur 2011:68) and dual citizenship was introduced in 2001 (ibid. p 71).
The origin of the present migration policy in Sweden can be traced back to early 1980’s, when several municipalities noticed the unequal reception of refugees among each other, thus initiating reforms that increased the responsibilities on the local governance level (Lidén & Nyhlén 2014:550). Borevi and Myrberg argue that the phenomenon of refugees geographically concentrated to certain municipalities, especially in urban regions, became part of the political discourse during the early 1980s, as the decline in labour migration was met by an increase in the reception of refugees (Borevi & Myrberg 2010:6). The outcry for changes in the reception resulted in reforms that attempted to effectively integrate refugees into the Swedish society through planning and controlling where refugees would reside. Here, the Immigration Board, later titled the Swedish Migration Agency, became responsible for establishing agreements between the state and the municipalities to assure accommodation for new arrivals (Lidén & Nyhlén 2014:550).

On the theme of social rights in Sweden, Samers argues that “the economic, political, and social rights of immigrants are now wide-ranging, including unemployment and occupational insurance, national health insurance, pensions for disability and retirement, illness compensation, and parental allocations for children, just to name a few benefits” (Samers 2010:260). During the early 1990s, a significant increase in unemployment became the results of the crisis within the banking, property and financial sectors. At this time the share of migrants who were asylum-seekers and refugees increased (Migrationsverket 2014c), as did the global migration (Collier 2013:51). In 1992 the Swedish government reduced asylum benefits by 10 per cent with the motive that social benefits have been reduced for other citizens and migrant groups, stating that asylum-seekers should be no different (Samers 2010:261). This has led Sainsbury to conclude that the social rights of asylum-seekers in Sweden have deteriorated, as the entitlement to regular assistance in Sweden has been lost (Sainsbury 2006:239p.) Lidén and Nyhlén argue that the local level plays a central role in the Swedish migration system, since municipalities have full sovereignty to accept or decline refugees, which in turn has created a variation in the numbers of immigrants per municipality (Lidén & Nyhlén 2014:547).

The Swedish Migration Agency is commissioned by the Swedish Parliament and government, who have declared that “the Migration Board 8 is to strive for a long-term, sustainable migration policy that safeguards asylum rights and, within the framework of regulated immigration, facilitates mobility across borders and promotes a needs-driven labour immigration, while utilising and considering the development effects of migration, and furthering European and international cooperation” (Migrationsverket 2014b). The Swedish Migration Agency is able to offer asylum-seekers temporary accommodations during the period of the decision-making. On the agency’s homepage, the following statement can be read: “You cannot choose were you are going to live, and you must be prepared to move to a town where housing is available. You may also need to move to a new location during the waiting period for your decision, due to lack of space” (Migrationsverket 2014a). Furthermore, the Swedish Migration Agency claims that if an asylum-seeker arrange their own accommodation, the Board will not be responsible for the living costs. However, if the person is no longer able to live in an arrangement of their own, the Swedish Migration Agency offers places at their

8 In March 2015, the National Migration Board changed name to the Swedish Migration Agency.
accommodation centres (ABO) where space is available. Whether the asylum-seeker chooses to arrange their own accommodation or to live in an accommodation centre, they are required to remain available for contact, so that the Swedish Migration Agency can notify of the pending asylum-cases. If an asylum-application is rejected, the immigrant is allowed to stay in the accommodation provided by the Swedish Migration Agency until he or she leaves the country. However, if the individual goes into hiding to avoid contact with the Swedish Migration Agency, their accommodation might be withdrawn and they will become deregistered from the reception system (Migrationsverket 2014a). If a residence permit is granted, Swedish Public Employment Service or the Swedish Migration Agency may help the refugee to find housing. As for declined asylum-seekers, the accommodations provided by the Swedish Migration Agency allow the individual to stay until further notice. The Swedish Migration Agency also have the ability to create temporary accommodation centres, Anläggningsboende tillfälligt (ABT). ABT is the common name for the accommodations that the Swedish Migration Agency rent that are not apartments. Instead ABT commonly consists of accommodations on hostels, cabin villages and similar facilities. ABT is subject to direct procurement. Therefore, the procurement of ABT does not need to be publically advertised and the bids do not have to follow the standard procedures. Instead, the direct procurements can be described as when the Swedish Migration Agency directly contacts individual companies, and can be used when the initial framework directive is with a municipality is insufficient (Migrationsverket 2014d).

In late 2010, a new legislation concerning the establishment for newly arrived immigrants came into force: the Establishment Act (SFS 2010:197). This legislation covers individuals between 20-64 years old that has been given a residence permit as refugees or for refugee similar reasons and to their family members who immigrates within two years and unaccompanied children. The legislation obliges the Swedish Public Employment Service responsible for the coordination of refugee reception and for the first two years after an individual receives a residence permit. Arbetsförmedlingen is also responsible for coordinating dialogues for establishment with the refugees, where the issue of housing is supposed to be handled primarily. If a person requires aid to find accommodation, Arbetsförmedlingen will help to direct them to a municipality that have a joint agreement on refugee reception. In addition, the planning of settlements must be based on each person’s experience and background, and the municipality placement should be made where there are sufficient conditions for work within a commuting distance (Arbetsförmedlingen 2015). Newly arrived immigrants may be eligible for introduction benefits, on the condition that they have an individual introduction plan at Arbetsförmedlingen. In addition, a person entitled to introduction benefit may also be eligible for a supplementary introduction benefit for housing if they live alone in their own accommodation (Försäkringskassan 2015). The liberal refugee admission policies, accompanied by generous refugee integration programme and generally tolerant attitudes and adoption of cultural diversity within the political dimension have been further characteristic for Sweden when dealing with the effects on forced migration (Valenta & Bunar 2010:464, Castles & Miller 2009:262).

During the late 1960s and 1970s, Sweden practiced a strict immigration policy. People who desired to immigrate to Sweden were required to have both a job offer and an arranged accommodation. The former Immigration Board conducted labour market reviews, together with the employers’ and employees’ confederations, and decided
whether the demand for foreign labour could be provided by unemployed in Sweden. During this period, the required residence period in order to become a citizen was lowered from seven to five years, which currently applies.

Table 3. Asylum claims and granted residence permits in Sweden (1984-2014)

Table 3 shows the number of asylum claims in relation to the number of given residence permits in Sweden during the period 1984 - 2014. During the mid-1980s, the number of asylum-seekers mainly from Iran, Iraq, Syria, Turkey, Lebanon and Eritrea increased in Western Europe. By the end of the decade, there was an increase of asylum-seekers from Somalia, Kosovo and the former Soviet Union. Subsequently, these increases in asylum claims led to longer waiting periods, an increase in the number of accommodation centres and resulted in an increased rate of rejection. According to the Swedish Migration Agency, the explanation for the increased rate of rejection was that the main reasons for claiming asylum was because of poverty, lack of faith in the future of the country of origin or a conviction of a better life in the host country, rather than persecution (Migrationsverket 2014c). During the 1990s, several of long-term states of war, such as in Lebanon, Eritrea, Iran and Iraq, ceased, thus decreasing the number of asylum-seekers from these places. However, the simultaneous collapse of former Yugoslavia drove a large number of people to seek refuge, resulting in 84 000 asylum claims in 1992 (Migrationsverket 2014c). During the end of the 1990s, Sweden took part of a UNHCR joint operation that evacuated 3 600 Kosovo Albanians from Macedonia. In 1994, the parliament decided that asylum-seekers arranging their own housing would be entitled a supplementary monthly grant for not staying in the accommodation centres (SFS 1994:137). This grant was later removed in 2005, with the motivation from the government that it increased segregation due to the fact that asylum-seekers remained in the municipality if they were granted a residence permit (Prop. 2004/05:28). In 1997, a change in the Aliens act (SFS 1997:433), restricted the terms for family migration, resulting in the removal of the possibility for elderly
parents, especially widows and widowers, to reunite with adult children in the host country. In 2005, a new temporary act giving rejected asylum claims was given a second case review, resulting in an increase by 30,000 cases of which about 8,000 was from people who previously lived hidden in Sweden. In 2006, the municipalities became responsible for arranging accommodation for unaccompanied refugee children (Socialstyrelsen et al. 2012), which increased this number from about 400 asylum-seeking unaccompanied children per year to several thousands. In 2010, asylum-seekers were given the right to work during the processing time of their claim, provided that the person was able to prove their identity. In 2013, the Swedish Migration Agency began to give permanent residence permits to all Syrian and stateless arriving from Syria (Migrationsverket 2014c).

Placement policy
The administration of refugee immigrant issues became a formal governmental responsibility in 1985. The former Immigration Board was given the mandate to assign refugees to their municipalities of residence, which was made possible through regulated agreements between these governmental agencies. In turn, the municipalities were responsible to assign these refugees to their accommodation (Migrationsverket 2014c). After receiving a residence permit, the refugee was to stay within the assigned municipality for an introductory period of circa 18 months, an initial period which included beginner’s courses in the Swedish language (Edin et al. 2000:7). In their article Ethnic Enclaves and the Economic Success of Immigrants, Per-Anders Edin, Peter Fredriksson and Olof Åslund (2000) argue that this assignment strategy contains two important aspects: first, the strategy only applied to the initial location and thus did not restrict people from relocating if they could find their own accommodation, however resulting in the immigrant losing entitlement to their introduction activities provided by the host municipality; second, during 1985-1991, twenty percent of the inflow of political immigrants was embraced by the regulation on family immigration, thus traveling directly to a municipality and skipping the enrolment in the Immigration Board’s asylum reception. Conclusively, the authors state that this reform was the reaction to the high concentration of immigrants to larger cities (Edin et al 2000:7p). The reflections caught by Edin, Fredriksson and Åslund and the historical review of today’s Swedish Migration Agency (Migrationsverket 2014c) poses an idea that asylum-seekers were to be evenly distributed in different municipalities, that smaller municipalities had the advantages of closeness between residents, and that the availability of housing became the key factor. These changes in placement policies was also affected by the passing of a law on family migration in 1989, which restricted the possibilities of family immigration for other than close family members to be given the right to stay in a municipality instead of being assigned to an accommodation centre (SFS 1989:529, later replaced by SFS 2006:97).

The early 1990s became a period of harsher asylum policies in Sweden and similar Western European states. Asylum-seekers were no longer required to stay at the accommodation centres. However, a great majority of them did because of the daily allowance being conditionally based on this accommodation (Andersson & Nilsson 2011:175). However, Sweden simultaneously expanded the possibilities for asylum-seekers to arrange their own accommodation. In 1994, the act on the reception of
asylum-seekers came into force (SFS 1994:137). This act gave immigrants, provided that they could find housing of their own, the freedom to decide their initial place of residence. Simultaneously, asylum-seekers received an increased right to work. In their paper Asylum-seekers and Undocumented Migrants’ Increased Social Rights in Sweden, Andersson and Nilsson (2011) reflects on the correlation between an expansion of the social rights for this group and Sweden’s major economic crisis in the early 1990s, stating that the reform was quite surprising given the current situation. Conclusively, the authors assume that an expansion of the social rights had financial reasons as an ulterior motive, since these reforms cut (or at least they did not increase) public spending (Andersson & Nilsson 2011:180). Furthermore, they argue that it is clear that social rights in general have been reduced, regardless of the policy’s motives. The only exception is the increased possibility for asylum-seekers to arrange their own accommodations outside the accommodation centres (Andersson & Nilsson 2011:175).

Despite recognising housing as a less clear cut case for analysis, the authors appears clear about the statement that the possibilities for asylum-seekers to live outside the accommodation centres currently are greater than they were in the early 1990s. In 2001, Sweden became part of the Schengen collaboration, thus opening the national borders to EU citizens in the countries that were part of the collaboration. During the same year, dual citizenship became legal. In 2003, the Swedish Government Official Report Etablering i Sverige – Möjligheter för individ och samhälle investigated the consequences of the EBO act on asylum-seekers, by interviewing the municipalities, the Swedish Migration Agency and the County Councils. Two negative results of the EBO act are described: first, while the asylum period is stressful for asylum-seekers and their children, and the integration of their host families are postponed and obstructed; second, those who choose to arrange their own accommodation tend to stay in the municipality in which they resided during the asylum period, even after receiving a residence permit, which further increases both alienation and ethnic segregation (SOU 2003:41).

In summing up the Swedish immigrant policy, Myrberg argues that it is distinctive in a European perspective, as it is based on comparatively generous principles and a greater variation in the yearly reception (Myrberg 2012:73). However, Myrberg’s analysis is put in relation to the Danish immigrant policy, thus it comes to the conclusion that the Swedish principles might not be possible to administrate through the Danish placement policy model. This relationship within Sweden’s placement policy is elaborated in another article by Borevi and Myrberg (2010), who argue that Swedish immigrant policy goals are set against the individual’s own interest of choosing their area of settlement and the place of residence. Borevi and Myrberg describes the general policy goal of achieving socially balanced residential communities and promote inclusiveness through civic participation as being set against the possible preferences of an ethnic group to maintain their social and cultural affinity. As a consequence, the general housing policy aspirations that promote freedom of choice and integration are in direct contrast to the requirement to effectively introduce a particularly vulnerable group to an acceptable accommodation (Borevi & Myrberg 2010:5p). In order to better understand Sweden’s immigrant policy, we will need to move our gaze to the Swedish housing market.

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9 This is commonly referred to as EBO-lagen (The EBO act). EBO is an abbreviation for Eget Boende, literary translated to Own Accommodation.
Housing

Hannu Ruonavaara argues that the Swedish housing market appears to be a unique phenomenon when put in an international context, as housing is rooted in the civil society in a peculiar way (Ruonavaara 2012:100). A contextualisation of the statement made by Ruonavaara can be made through reading the first chapter of Sweden’s Instrument of Government, *Regeringsformen*, which declares the basic principles of the form of government. The first chapter’s second article declares the following:

> Public power shall be exercised with respect for the equal worth of all and the liberty and dignity of the individual. The personal, economic and cultural welfare of the individual shall be fundamental aims of public activity. In particular, the public institutions shall secure the right to employment, housing and education, and shall promote social care and social security, as well as favourable conditions for good health (SFS 1974:152, Chap. 1, Art. 2; Sveriges Riksdag 2011).

Despite the finding that the public institutions in particular shall secure the right to housing, this is not the kind of regulation where an individual can confront and make the state face court for not complying with the law. Instead, the right to housing is perceived as a goal of which the public institutions strive to fulfil.

Table 4. Number of dwellings in completed buildings by tenure form (1980-2014)

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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Owner occupied</th>
<th>Tenant owned</th>
<th>Rented</th>
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Source: Statistiska Centralbyråns (2015a)

Table 4 describes the number of dwellings in completed buildings in Sweden between the years 1984-2014 and divided by tenure form. In 1985, the decision by the Swedish central bank (the Riksbank) to deregulate the credit market made it possible for banks to lend unlimited amounts of money without needing the consent of the Riksbank. In combination with the generous state subsidies of the interest rates, it became very lucrative to invest in housing construction. A comprehensive tax reform in 1991 increased the construction costs, which in combination with a decrease demand because of an economic crisis during the early 1990s resulted in a dramatic decrease in new
housing construction (Statistiska Centralbyråns 2012). The construction of new housing stayed low for the remainder of the decade. After a gradually increase during early 2000s, the construction decreased again in 2009-2010, as a result of the financial crisis (Statistiska Centralbyråns 2014). Judging by the fluctuations in the construction of dwellings and the explanations made by Statistics Sweden, it becomes clear that policy decisions and the economy greatly influences the housing market. However, it becomes important to have in mind that it is a lagging effect and that the whole construction period spans over several years. In that sense, investments in new construction is exposed to a long procedure, and the effect of the economy and policy changes might be statistically visible the following years.

Traditionally, the aim of the regulations surrounding the housing market in Sweden has aimed to decrease its instability (Holmqvist & Turner 2013:238), such as those described through table 4. As a result, this might have created and nourished a large share of rental and co-operative accommodation within the housing stock. In their article, Municipal Housing Companies in Sweden – Social by Default, Lena Magnusson and Bengt Turner (2008) describes the differences of national housing policies in Europe as to be found in each country’s historical, cultural and religious background, meaning that housing policy in this sense is part of a general welfare policy which varies between regions and countries. Same goes for the responsibility for providing housing for asylum-seekers, refugees and other vulnerable groups. In Sweden, this responsibility mainly lies on organisations within the public sector. Here, the task is handed over to join-stock companies owned by municipalities (Magnusson & Turner 2008:276). This policy is commonly named public housing. Recent data from Statistics Sweden shows us that in December 2014, a total of 4 669 081 dwellings existed in Sweden. 2 356 831 (50 per cent) of them being apartment dwellings, of which the public housing companies jointly owned about 684 000 (29 per cent) (Statistiska Centralbyråns 2015). Gazing back at the development of public housing during the twentieth century, it has come to be regarded as a sub-tenure form with the ultimate goal to be open to everyone. Developed in the 1930s, as a state action to cope with an ongoing recession, the public housing phenomena peaked during the state financed housing development initiative commonly named the million programme. This programme made possible a construction of about a hundred thousand residences per year during the period 1965 to 1974, took the lead in providing housing for disadvantaged groups and expanded the influence of their tenants during the 1980s (cf. Bengtsson 1994, Ramberg 2000, Christophers 2013).

The crucial changes in the prerequisites of the public housing companies in Sweden, and which might have had severe indirect effects on asylum-seekers’ and refugees ability to request housing, was established in early 1990s and early 2010s. The first reform, the Right to Buy-programme, became the beginning of an increased marketization of the public housing sector, according to Christophers (2013:891p). This state-municipal deregulation programme, inspired by the 1980s reform by the British Thatcher regime, gave tenants in the public sector the opportunity to buy their residence, which subsequently led to a large quantity of public housing being bought for reasonable price, just to be sold on the regular ownership market (Andersson & Magnusson-Turner 2014:3). As a consequence, the share of tenure forms was redistributed, leading to a smaller share of rental accommodations, thus limiting the amount of possible tenants per available rental residence. The second crucial change in
the public housing policy was in 2010, when the public housing companies’ initial conditions changed through a new act (SFS 2010:879) obliging them to operate on commercial basis. One of the main purposes of this act was for the public housing policies to better coincide with the common rules on state aid and competition decided within the European Union. It has been stated that this act can be interpreted as aiming to clearly emphasise the responsibility of the municipalities and the state (cf. Lind & Lundström 2011), but there are also other interpretations the implementation of the act. In a report commissioned by the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (which represents the municipalities, who in turn owns the public housing companies) Grander and Stigendal (2012) argues that the possibilities for the public housing companies themselves to work with the issue of social inclusion and integration been limited to commercially based actions (Grander & Stigendal 2012:51p). A similar reflection is made in a government report by the National Board of Housing, Building and Planning. The report expresses the uncertainty that followed the new act, including what effect the new legislation might have on the municipalities’ abilities to let their housing companies be mainly responsible for area renewal. Simultaneously, the report mentions the existence of interpretations that actions concerning social inclusion and integration are based on a general conviction that these actions are profitable in the long run, and even unprofitable if they are not performed. However, the report have not found empirical evidence that supports this conviction (Boverket 2010:13).

Table 5. Asylum-seekers, granted residence permits and constructed rented dwellings (1980-2014)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of asylum-seekers</th>
<th>Granted residence permits</th>
<th>Rented dwellings in completed construction</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
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Source: Migrationsverket (2015b), Statistiska Centralbyrån (2015a)

Table 5 merges the data on the number of asylum-seekers and the number of granted residence permits (from table 3) together with the number of rental dwellings in the stock of total completed buildings during the period of 1984-2014 (from Table 4). As explained in the two previous tables, there are several factors that have strongly influenced the amount of claims, decisions and construction. As the relationship between asylum claims and granted residence permits are somewhat interrelated,
meaning that an increase in the number of claims probably have an effect on the number of granted permits. The relationship between asylum cases and rental dwelling construction is more difficult to determine, as they do not directly influence each other. If we relate to the historical descriptions of this data explained above, and the possible implications of immigrant, immigration and housing policy changes, as well as their interrelationship, might rouse some interesting thoughts. This will be further elaborated in the discussion section.

Each year since 2005, the National Board of Housing, Building and Planning performs a quantitative survey, *Bostadsmarknadsenkäten*, investigating the Swedish municipalities’ views on their local housing markets. One section of the survey addresses the conditions of disadvantaged groups on the housing market. The groups that are addressed here are students, young adults, elders and newly arrived immigrants. A certain selection of questions are directed to the municipality’s view on the housing market conditions for refugees (including asylum-seekers), and poses the question ‘How does the municipality provide housing for refugees?’

Table 6. Municipal provision of housing for asylum-seekers and refugees (2005-2014)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Collaboration (regular) with public housing company</th>
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<th>Collaboration (if necessary) with public housing company</th>
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<th>Asylum seekers and Refugees arrange own accommodation</th>
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Source: Boverket (2014, 2015), Own processing of data.

Table 6 describes the collected answers given by the respondents. It is important to note that the municipalities were able to choose several answers in the questionnaire; however no municipality distorted the material by choosing both alternatives of

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10 The result presented in in Table 6 was gathered through compiling raw data from the open database of National Board of Housing, Building and Planning, as well as through correspondence with one of the agency’s officials.
collaboration with the public housing company or private property owner. However, some municipalities chose “other”, and wrote a comment similar to “They arrange their own accommodation” or “We use our public housing company”. This type of answers have been carefully considered and, if necessary, relocated to match the other answer categories, in order to provide a more legitimate result. Officials at the municipalities, the respondents, were given six options for answering how they provide housing for asylum-seekers and refugees. In 2005, 131 municipalities collaborated with a public housing company on a regular basis, and 75 did it if necessary. In total 71 per cent of all municipalities collaborated with public housing companies in 2005. During 2007 and 2008, the regular collaboration with the public housing companies increased, resulting in 188 municipalities collaborating regularly in 2008, while 76 did it if necessary. In total, 91 per cent collaborated with the public housing companies in 2008. The municipalities that collaborate with public housing if necessary have slightly increased since 2008, reaching the highest rate (92) in 2014. As for the regular collaboration between municipality and the public housing company, a slight decrease (169) was noted in 2011, followed by an increase that hit 212 in 2014. Between 2005 and 2014, the municipal collaboration (regular and if necessary) with private property owners have increased from 100 (34 per cent) in 2005 to 178 (61 per cent) in 2014. The municipalities reporting that asylum-seekers and refugees provide their own accommodation have increased from 28 (9 per cent) in 2005, reaching the highest number, 45 (15 per cent) in 2011, and decreasing to 39 (13 per cent) in 2014.

An interesting addition to the survey was made in 2014, presenting two new alternatives to this section. In 2014, 35 municipalities answered that asylum-seekers and refugees as a group are considered in the general planning, while 23 municipalities answered that they block-rent apartment buildings as a solution. Hopefully, these alternatives will be comparable over time in a couple of years.11

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11 Please see Appendix 4 for this data.
5. The interview study
This section provides the translated transcriptions from the qualitative expert interviews. The structure of this section is to combine the informants’ different answers to a question or a theme from each interview. The similar themes and answers are then portrayed as a simulation of a joint conversation on each topic. Each of the informants’ answers is referenced through declaring the number of the question from where the answer was taken. Every answer/reflection by a certain informant is cited using their surname, the year when the interview took place, followed by a number that represents where in Appendix 3, their answer can be found (e.g. Holmgren 2015:1). In order to provide an overview of the themes discussed in each interview, each theme is discretionally separated between paragraphs. In order to connect this section to the parties’ policy proposals that was presented in the introduction, the subsection “Attitudes toward policy proposals” gathers the informant’s reactions and reflections. The results found in this section expose the different attitudes and approaches to the phenomena of housing policies of asylum-seekers and refugees.

Interview results
Karin Perols, analyst at The Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions, describes the complexity of the terminology that surrounds contemporary integration policy as a common topic of discussion between municipal representatives. According to Perols, newly arrived immigrants, such as asylum-seekers and refugees do not have sufficient queuing time in the rental housing agencies’ systems and they do not have access to the home ownership market (Perols 2015:7). Ida Holmgren, senior advisor on migration at The Swedish Red Cross, states that people with a residence permit face the same difficulties as several other disadvantaged groups on the housing market (Holmgren 2015:7). Malin Sahlén, project manager on integration at the liberal free-market think tank, declares that the current situation on Sweden is that there are no job opportunities where there are housing and no housing where there are job opportunities (Sahlén 2015:7). Anders Sjelvgren, head of department at The Swedish National Board of Housing, Building and Planning, notes that since there is an abundance of customers on the Swedish housing market, the market is primarily attracted to the customers with the highest ability to pay (Sjelvgren 2015:7). As a group, asylum-seekers and refugees generally lack information about the housing system and the social contacts to mediate contracts (Holmgren 2015:7). Undeniably, they are also victims of discrimination (Sahlén 2015:7). We have an issue of black trade of rental contracts and exploitation of people that cannot request housing on the regular market, still, a rental contract is the initial solution (Perols 2015:7).

The general debate on integration is all about immigrants’ establishment in the host society through access to the domestic labour and housing market (Perols 2015:1). Anna Rehnvall, project manager on migration and integration at the green liberal think-tank FORES, and Andreas Bergström, vice president at FORES, welcome that the immigration topic is back on the political agenda, clarifying that it is not immigration that have caused the current problems of the housing market (Rehnvall & Bergström 2015:4). However, the results from the interviews point out separate interpretations of the concept of integration: it is about including people to our community and to feel included without being the same (Sjelvgren 2015:1), it is a mutual process between the society and the individual where a joint adaption occurs (Holmgren 2015:1; Perols 2015:1); it is closely connected to the labour market (Sahlén 2015:1) and it is generally
focusing on the immigrants’ integration in the host society rather than the host society’s adaption to the new demography (Perols 2015:1). Critique against the concept of integration is mentioned during the interview with The Swedish Red Cross, as Holmgren notes that the public debate on migration rarely addresses the fact that it concerns people who have lost their entire lives, who at best have their families with them (Holmgren 2015:2).

It becomes evident for the informants to contemplate on the role of housing within the political goal of a successful integration policy. Housing plays a fundamental role within a person’s life and this issue needs to be considered on a more regular basis (Holmgren 2015:2). Perols argues that establishment could be a more suitable term than integration, as a sustainable housing condition is one of the basic prerequisites for a successful establishment within the host society (Perols 2015:1-2). But housing might even have a negative effect on a person’s establishment, as the dwelling might be geographically misplaced (Holmgren 2015:2). If a person does not have a home it becomes more difficult to find an occupation. It currently exist an insider-outsider situation on the housing market, which is disadvantageous for immigrants and other economically deprived groups (Rehnvall & Bergström 2015:1). A person who has access to the domestic labour market may easier gain access to the housing market, the education system and a social life (Sahlén 2015:1). Sweden’s current housing shortage might have amplified xenophobic disorders (Sahlén 2015:7, Sjelvgren 2015:2), as situations of scarcity create a breeding ground for discontent and begins a hunt for scapegoats (Sjelvgren 2015:2).

Each one of the informants emphasises the importance of the relationship and roles between the public and the non-profit sectors. Annelie Rostedt, analyst at the County Administrative Board of Stockholm, recognises that Sweden currently receives more immigrants than earlier and that a larger number of residence permits are being handed out, which subsequently means that the public sector collectively have to be able to ensure that those who migrate to Sweden get a suitable accommodation (Rostedt 2015:1). Sjelvgren insists that the state needs to take more responsibility, since newly arrived immigrants as a group are disadvantaged in the host society (Sjelvgren 2015:3). Holmgren argues that the host society during a limited period of time needs to allocate additional resources for newly arrived immigrants in order for them to become a part of society on equal terms, emphasising that the only thing that is special about newly arrived immigrants is the fact that they are newly arrived (Holmgren 2015:3). According to Sahlén, establishment should be made possible by aid from the market, as well-functioning housing and labour markets facilitate peoples’ establishment (Sahlén 2015:3). Sahlén argues that the policy regarding the establishment of immigrants currently should be handled separately, such as in state assistance for the first accommodation, but emphasises that a better functioning system would require a lesser role of the public (Sahlén 2015:3). According to Bergström, the role of the state should be to simplify the planning and building regulations in order to improve the legislative process between the idea of a construction project to when the household finally can move in (Rehnvall & Bergström 2015:3). At some point, Swedish policy makers made the decision to create a system of special engagements dedicated to newly arrived immigrants before they are embraced by the general policies (Perols 2015:3). These policies still exists (Perols 2015:3, Holmgren 2015:3), however everything would be easier if the public sector was better at handling newly arrived immigrants (Perols
To have an accommodation is one thing, but being part of the society is another (Sjelvgren 2015:4). As an asylum-seeker and a newly arrived immigrant, you are unable to quickly establish a sufficient social network, but through cooperation between the public and non-profit sector, it is possible to enable a better establishment through teaching the Swedish language, networking, finding contact persons and providing homework assistance (Rostedt 2015:2, Rehnvall & Bergström 2015:3).

Sahlén argues that the non-profit sector plays a significant role in people’s establishment and thus shall be encouraged, although we should not solely rely on their capability (Sahlén 2015:4). A similar reflection is held by Holmgren, who describes the role of the non-profits as an essential complement where the governmental agencies mandate ends, and that the former may offer social forms of occupation during the asylum period (Holmgren 2015:4). Perols notes that it would be remarkable if government employees would provide the informal networks and associations, and since they only work regular hours, while most voluntary efforts are made during the evenings (Perols 2015:4). The non-profit sector also has good potential to expand and an ability to establish local ties (Rehnvall & Bergström 2015:3).

In a comparison between Sweden and Canada, Rehnvall describes a Canadian model where the state uses public procurement to engage actors within the civil society, which in turn receives a greater role in the establishment process (Rehnvall & Bergström 2015:3). Sjelvgren have noticed that the Church of Sweden shows interest in taking more responsibility, but in order to do so, they need to establish a company so that they can enter agreements with the Swedish Migration Agency (Sjelvgren 2015:4).

In England and Germany, the churches play a more significant role in the establishment process through state financing (Perols 2015:4). In Holmgren’s view, the role of the Swedish Red Cross is to be a complement to the regular system, and as an independent association they provide support to the governmental agencies. Furthermore, Holmgren recognises an increased focus on the role of the non-profit sector, especially since the system of introduction guides, etableringslotsar, was introduced (Holmgren 2015:4). Perols notices the potential in further development of the relationship between the public and voluntary sector, especially because of the values that only can be found in the non-profit sector (Perols 2015:4).

On the topic of housing policies for refugees, the current division of roles between the local and national government plays an important part. Likewise what is being done before and after the residence permit is given. As a person receives a residence permit in Sweden, but does not receive a municipality placement, they can end up in a state of limbo for up to two years, and the current role of the Swedish Migration Agency is to give provide ABO-housing and later on announce their decision, which results in a period of irrelevance for the asylum-seeker (Holmgren 2015:4). Holmgren argues that when it comes to policy-making, the society wakes up first when a residence permit is given, thus failing to recognise that an asylum-seeker needs a foundation from their first day in the host society. Furthermore, Holmgren have noted that about 75 per cent of those who claim asylum in Sweden are given residence permits, but that the integrational efforts only after the permit is given (Holmgren 2015:4). On discussing the effects if the current system, Perols argues that smaller municipalities have experienced increases in the amount of students at their schools as a result of refugee placements, which in turn demands an increase of educational material and teachers (Perols 2015:5).

Sahlén, Sjelvgren and Perols clearly agree that the state should take more responsibility
Holmgren recognises the roles between governing levels as both unsatisfactory and incomprehensible in many cases, meaning that the main problem is that the responsibilities of asylum-seekers and refugees have been separated in a too large extent. In turn, this prevents the municipalities from developing a holistic view of the establishment process, as they might negotiate with the County Administrative Board on one hand, just to see an ABT being established by the Swedish Migration Agency the same afternoon (Holmgren 2015:5). Sjelvgren states that it is not reasonable that such a big responsibility is solely put in the municipalities’ laps. Historically, several sparsely populated municipalities had a housing surplus and was able to save their public housing companies through renting the available apartments to refugees and other immigrants, this is however not possible today as this surplus no longer exists (Sjelvgren 2015:5).

Perols recognises that current system might cause unrest for the local population and might create a feeling that the municipalities are unable to handle the situation (Perols (2015:5)). Holmgren’s suggestion is that the government should make efforts during the asylum period as well, such as mapping skills and providing meaningful internships, with the motivation that occupation is proven to be helpful against the development of traumas from war (2015:4). Sahlén suggests that if the municipalities’ initial responsibilities are removed they might have the ability to be better engaged in the subsequent stages of the establishment (Sahlén 2015:5).

As an asylum-seeker entering Sweden has the option to arrange own accommodation (EBO) or being assisted by the Swedish Migration Agency (ABO), it appears that both options have positive and negative effects, according to the informants. Sjelvgren declares that the concept of EBO is both a good idea and a driving force for asylum-seekers and refugees, but that this idea is built upon the premise of a well-functioning housing market (Sjelvgren 2015:6). Rehnvall and Bergström are of the idea that EBO is an important liberal value, and argue that the basic principle should be that people themselves should choose where to live. This is similar to Sahlén’s and Rostedt’s responses, that it should require a lot before prohibiting people from choosing themselves, as this freedom should be respected as much as possible (Sahlén 2015:6), and that the strength of EBO comes from people’s ability to choose for themselves (Rostedt 2015:3). If we do not know the correct answer to a societal problem, the alternative that gives people the most freedom of action would be the best choice (Rehnvall & Bergström 2015:5a). However, Sahlén adds that this might result in people choosing to settle where the opportunities to find work is limited (Sahlén 2015:6).

Perols mentions that there currently are no criteria that require EBO to be a real accommodation - a post box address is sufficient (Perols 2015:6). Holmgren argues that the obvious advantage of EBO is that it is an alternative to ABO, which give people control over their own situation, however, this power often results in fewer opportunities (Holmgren 2015:6). Sjelvgren agrees that EBO does not function as originally intended (Sjelvgren 2015:6). According to Perols, the EBO act is acceptable if people find socially sustainable accommodations, which rarely seems to be the case according to the municipalities (Perols 2015:6).
Sjelvgren states that ABO is commonly offered in areas where people do not wish to end up, which in turn causes more to choose EBO. Consequently, this increases the number of people who register themselves on post box addresses or live in overcrowded apartments with other immigrants (Sjelvgren 2015:6). Perols is of the opinion that ABO should be the government’s responsibility, adding that the placement of newly arrived immigrants should be planned together with the municipalities in a larger extent (Perols 2015:5). According to Perols, the strength in ABO is that it is a real accommodation and not just a post box address, adding that it is a safe and well-planned accommodation (Perols 2015:5). The weaknesses in ABO lies in the fact that the facilities are in bad shape, the communication routes are insufficient and that there is a lack of occupational activities and jobs (Perols 2015:6) and that the Swedish Migration Agency have difficulties in meeting the demand of ABO (Rostedt 2015:3). If the alternative of ABO were attractive enough, people would not choose EBO to the extent they currently do (Holmgren 2015:6). Another possible flaw in some ABO-accommodations are their reliance on geographical location, which might cause people to become more isolated, compared to an EBO-accommodation that might provide more social contacts (Rostedt 2015:3). Perols suggests that a better planning of ABO might be the key, made possible through integrational efforts during the asylum period, a better organisation of occupations or web-based language courses; today these efforts are mainly made by non-profit organisations (Perols 2015:6).

The consequences of the Establishment act\textsuperscript{12} are recognised by five informants. Prior this reform, the Swedish Public Employment Service had no responsibility for newly arrived immigrants, as completion the language classes Swedish for Immigrants was recommended before registration (Perols 2015:3). Suddenly, Swedish Public Employment Service established an internal division that was to manage matching between labour and housing market (Holmgren 2015:8). Since the reform, Rostedt argues, the anticipated matchmaking between the labour and the housing market have become based on where vacant housing is found instead of where there are job opportunities (Rostedt 2015:4), yet it originally was a good idea (Holmgren 2015:8). Sjelvgren states that matchmaking housing with jobs is not a natural task for Swedish Public Employment Service (Sjelvgren 2015:8). Rostedt argues that the municipalities lost a large part of their mandate when the Establishment act came in to force; however, their responsibilities for individuals within their boundaries remain (Rostedt 2015:4). Holmgren have noticed that no survey on competence, place of residence were made, and argues that very few placements have been made on the basis of an individual’s competence (Holmgren 2015:8). However, Rehnvall and Bergström recognises that the system of introduction guides, etableringslotsar, have given the newly arrived immigrant increased possibilities to get to know their nearby neighbourhoods, and that the connection to local businesses can provide much that the state cannot (Rehnvall & Bergström 2015:4).

So what characterises a functioning housing market for asylum-seekers and refugees? The responses from the informants are similar to each other. It is characterised by a better balance between supply and demand (Perols 2015:17, Sjelvgren 2015:13, Sahlén 2015:17). There must also be a possibility for new households, despite living conditions, to acquire accommodation on the housing market (Perols 2015:17,

\textsuperscript{12} SFS 2010:197.
There must be possible to rent an apartment on short notice (Sahlén 2015:17) and to be mobile as a household (Sjelvårgren 2015:13). Finally, newly arrived immigrants must be recognised as an important group in the planning process (Rostedt 2015:5, 7). Rehnvall and Bergström conclude that the general attitude towards the domestic housing and labour market policies is that only minor adjustments are possible (Rehnvall & Bergström 2015:4). The act that regulates the municipalities’ responsibilities to provide conditions, through planning, for everyone living within their boundaries to live in good housing appears to be difficult to comply according to Sjelvårgren and Holmgren. The act becomes toothless without the right market conditions, despite the municipalities’ efforts with social contracts and owner directives to public housing companies (Sjelvårgren 2015: 9). Holmgren states that incentives to comply the act are insufficient, and argues that since asylum-seekers and refugees as a group might vary in size over time, the municipalities should receive funding equal to their expenses (2015:9). Sahlén recognises that it exist a variety of building legislations that affects several stakeholders, leaving the municipalities in a tight position (Sahlén 2015:9). Two informants declare that their work is specifically not related to this act, as it is handled by their respective department for housing and planning (Rostedt 2015:5, Perols 2015:9).

**Attitudes toward policy proposals**

**An abolition of the EBO act**

Rehnvall and Bergström states that an abolishment of the EBO act probably would create additional problems, and suggests that there is an idea that these accommodations can receive approvals from an inspection agency (Rehnvall & Bergström 2015:5a). This suggestion is also mentioned by Perols, who proposes that the government and the municipalities together examines EBO-accommodations certain criteria, such as contracts, certificate of residence and that people do not live in overcrowded apartments (Perols 2015:6). It might be necessary to inspect EBO-accommodations, as people in some cases might not live with their families and friends, but with people that might take advantage of their situation (Holmgren 2015:6). Perols declares that The Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions do not recommend an abolishment of the Act. Neither do they recommend that those who chose EBO no longer should be entitled a housing allowance, as it might result in already disadvantaged groups becoming even more vulnerable. However, they request a revision of the act so that it contains some better requirements for an accepted EBO (Perols 2015:16a). Rostedt and Sjelvårgren claims that an abolishment of the EBO Act should not be performed without the provision of an equivalent alternative, such as a provision of sufficient resources and good planning of ABO (Rostedt 2015:6a, Sjelvårgren 2015:6a). Neither Sahlén would advocate an abolishment; it might not be legally feasible (Sahlén 2015:16a).

**Modular housing units**

On the proposal to construct modular housing units in order to facilitate the municipalities’ receiving of asylum-seekers and refugees, six out of six informants are positive to the idea. Sjelvårgren, Rehnvall and Bergström argue that it could provide a short-term solution that complements the long-term solution (Sjelvårgren 2015:12b, Rehnvall & Bergström 2015:4). Holmgren welcomes it as an innovative proposal, as

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13 SFS 2000:1383
long as the result is adequate living standards (Holmgren 2015:16b). Sahlén recognises it as an idea worth further investigation (Sahlén 2015:16b). Perols recognises it as being a necessity to solve the high rate of asylum immigration, arguing that it is supposed to be temporary (Perols 2015:16b). Rostedt does not find modular housing units to be an ideal solution. Rostedt have heard of a proposal were asylum-seekers and immigrants can live inherent with elderly people who live in too big accommodations. Rostedt argues that this would be the ideal solution for a successful integration, however, it is probably not feasible (Rostedt 2015:6b).

First home guarantee
Another proposal suggests that municipalities more often should enter as a guarantor to the landlord of the accommodations that are offered to asylum-seekers and refugees that receives financial aid for establishment, as a “first-accommodation guarantee”. However, Sjelvgren argues that a political tension might be created if newly arrived immigrants are given priority in similar situations, and stresses the need to analyse this type of proposal thoroughly (Sjelvgren 2015:12c). According to Holmgren, the municipalities had this approach before the Establishment act. Holmgren argues that in most cases, the issue is not that the tenant is unable to pay rent but that the landlord requests a financial safety solution (Holmgren 2015:16c).

Family immigration
Another proposal addresses the idea that family immigration should be made possible only when the person living in Sweden has secured housing, employment and a steady income. In general the informants are sceptical to this proposal. Rostedt, Sjelvgren, Rehnvall and Bergström stress the importance to not mix up asylum rights with the establishment of asylum-seekers and refugees (Rostedt 2015:6d, Sjelvgren 2015:12d). Holmgren are of a similar opinion, meaning that it is crucial to separate the different types of family migration, like the difference between requests from newly arrived immigrants and the already established immigrants. Furthermore, Perols is convinced that reunification must be possible even before someone is considered being established (Perols 2015:16d). Holmgren declares that this proposal would results in a suspicion to foreigners, and argues that the families can have their own reasons of protection and that people do their best to find an accommodation (Holmgren 2015:16d). Sahlén is of the shared perception that this proposal should not be implemented, but that the topic should be further investigated with carefulness (Sahlén 2015:16d). Rehnvall and Bergström also stress the importance of a thorough analysis of possible effects of this restriction (Rehnvall & Berström 2015:5c).

Deregulation of rental market
Three out of six informants respond positively to deregulating rent levels in order to favour the construction of new rental dwellings. Rehnvall and Bergström argue that the basic idea is good, but that it does not solve the thresholds for newly arrived immigrants and low-income groups (Rehnvall 2015:5d). According to Sahlén, the price of an accommodation should be set by the market, considering it to be absurd that an area’s attractiveness is not better reflected in the price (Sahlén 2015:16e). Sjelvgren consider it to be a possible alternative to let a rent be market-set, meaning that it currently is a difference between what the market is willing to pay and the actual costs (Sjelvgren 2015:12e).
**Improved public procurement**
The proposal to improve the effectiveness of public procurement is met by different reactions. Perols declares that this topic is commonly discussed between the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions and the Swedish Migration Agency. Perols argues that it currently is the lowest price that prioritises the biddings, meaning that the public procurement act restricts where ABO can be established (Perols 2015:5). Rostedt and Sjelvgren argue that an adequate procurement can be performed if the purchaser is able to provide the requirements (Rostedt 2015:6f, Sjelvgren 2015:12f). Holmgren states that it is a crucial issue for government agencies to provide adequate requirements (2015:16f). Sahlén recognises procurement as a complex question, however insists that improvements are welcome (Sahlén 2015:16g).

**Full compensation for the municipalities**
State provision of full financial compensation for receiving municipalities is a crucial component for integration with the local community, says Holmgren, declaring that the Swedish Red Cross naturally is positive to all efforts that facilitate integration (Holmgren 2015:16g). Sjelvgren, Perols and Sahlén argue that the proposal is dependent on how it would be administrated. While Sjelvgren is not convinced that this is an ideal solution (Sjelvgren 2015:12g), Sahlén is open to the suggestion if the situation does not improve (Sahlén 2015:16g). Perols poses the question of for how long the state will be financing such compensation, meaning that the current period should cover 3,5 years after a residence permit is given, however the average establishment time is considerable longer (Perols 2015:16g).

**Housing for asylum-seekers provided by the Swedish Migration Agency**
The idea that asylum accommodations should be operated by the Swedish Migration Agency is recognised by Rostedt as a good idea, which also existed during the 1980s (Rostedt 2015:6b). Perols and Sjelvgren are also positive, meaning that the public sector would create a larger organisational foundation which however might be able to procure during peaks (Perols 2015:16h, Sjelvgren 2015:12h), and letting the market handle the fluctuations (Sjelvgren 2015:12h). Rehnvall and Bergström recognise that the Swedish Migration Agency has issues in implementing the rules of procurement (Rehnvall & Bergström 2015:5e). Sahlén are partially negative to the idea, meaning that a governmental agency should not be the contractor, however it might be a solution regarding the idea of modular housing units (Sahlén 2015:16h). Holmgren argues that the Swedish Migration Agency do many good things but often lack of supervising their projects and if the contractor are fulfilling the agreement. Holmgren adds the suggestion that the state reviews their own facilities and existing homes in order to determine if people with residence permits reside in accommodations meant for asylum-seekers (Holmgren 2015:16h).

**Oblige municipalities to receive asylum-seekers**
The final policy proposal suggests that the municipalities should be obliged to accept asylum-seekers and refugees. Holmgren’s reaction is to prompt the importance of asylum-seekers and refugees to feel welcome in the host society (Holmgren 2015:16i). Again, Sjelvgren argues that the state should have increased responsibilities (Sjelvgren 2015:12i). Rostedt argues that the suggestion might not be the ideal solution, meaning that it should be obvious that this topic is a shared responsibility and that implementing these sorts of proposals might increase political and social tensions (Rostedt 2015:6i).
Perols discusses it might be difficult to clarify this kind of obligation, preferring cooperation instead (2015:16i). Sahlén also recognises this obligation as not being optimally designed (Sahlén 2015:16i).
6. Analysis and discussion

This section attempts to connect what can be described as this thesis three foundational pillars: the concepts, the comparative study and the interview study. This foundation serves as the basis of a comprehensive discussion on the gathered research. The focus of the discussion is on the Swedish context, which also serves as the analytical basis. Furthermore, the analysis connects the results with additional theories on housing, immigration and immigrants that might be used to explain the phenomenon within its context.

The methods used in order to investigate the subject of housing policies for asylum-seekers and refugees suggests a triangulation between, first, the concepts of immigration policy (migration, forced migration, citizenship, residence permit, asylum and refugee status); second, the concepts of immigrant policy (social welfare, access to housing, integration, assimilation and establishment); and third, the relationship of the first two concepts in the context of the Swedish housing market. The relationships between these phenomena have been highlighted through a comprehensive literature study, comparing Sweden with the European Union, Italy, United Kingdom and Denmark accompanied by a set of six qualitative expert interviews that have provided additional perspectives on the Swedish context.

The complexity of the terminology that surrounds contemporary immigrant policy is indeed a relevant etymological discussion, as it is interpreted differently within the academic, the public and the political discourse. The informants’ similar yet different interpretations of integration and assimilation resembles a critique recognised by Anita Cvetkovic (2009:111), who argues that the culturally dominant concept of integration meets criticism from the sociological field, as it is claimed to ignore the political, social and economic dimensions of integration, and that it does not consider the individual’s own resources and ability to rationally take responsibility for their own integration. Judging from the interviews and the studied research literature, it is recognizable that the absence of consensus in the contents of the central concepts might as well be reflected within policy discussions, thus indirectly influencing the direction of the common policy making.

In a qualitative study comparing Denmark and Sweden through interviews with municipal officials in Arhus and Malmö, Gunnar Myrberg (2012) recognises the differences in each countries immigrant and immigration policies. In the concluding discussion, Myrberg emphasises the differences as being an expression of two separate philosophies in how small and relatively wealthy welfare countries should tackle the future challenges of a globalised world. Should these challenges be addressed by the Danish philosophy, through a minimum of commitment (related to international conventions) for the world’s vulnerable and oppressed people, while actively competing for the most skilled labour forces; or, by the Swedish philosophy, through an active commitment to the spirit of international conventions and simultaneously compete on the global market to a greater extent? Should Denmark formulate the immigrant policy through an adaptation to Danish “values”, language and cultural history in mind? Should Sweden formulate an immigrant policy through a joint adaptation with a new, shared society as the goal? (Myrberg 2012:69p). Traces of these reflections are found in conceptual discussions of the examined research literature as well as in the qualitative interviews. Is the establishment of refugees a task that should be administrated by the
If so, what period of time is reasonable for support? More importantly, how is it possible to create a general system with an effective administration of immigration and establishment, that simultaneously takes into account each migrant’s life story and individual prerequisites? It is evident that the commonly used migration terms such as assimilation and integration are filled with moral values, history and multiple doses of subjectivities, which in turn creates dissimilar interpretations and persuasions on the idea of successful immigration and immigrant policy making.

The informants recognise that asylum-seekers and refugees face similar obstacles on housing market. There is also a clear connection between the availability to request housing and to seize a job opportunity. As an analysis of labour market policies for asylum-seekers and refugees does not fit in the frame of this study, this is clearly a limitation for a sufficient analysis on this group. However, an interesting result from the interviews is that refugees and asylum-seekers appear to be locked out from the home-ownership market, thus being directed to the rental market. A flexible rental market becomes constricted by housing queues and a relatively low rate of new construction. In addition, the research results points out clear indications of discrimination against ethnic minorities, suffering from lack of information and exposure to exploitation. Thus, it can be assumed that even though a rental contract is the initial solution for an entrance ticket to the housing market, the ability to request housing within this sector becomes smaller than what is desirable. In a comparison with the article by Dell’Olio, on comparing Italy and the United Kingdom, it appears that discrimination against, and the exclusion of, immigrants on the housing market can be seen as either a consequence of or a cause of discrimination in other areas, such as politics, economy and culture (Dell’Olio 2004:117). The evidence from the interviews and literature research suggests that the varied forms of discrimination of asylum-seekers, refugees and other immigrants on the housing market are similarly recognised within the compared countries.

Some evidence from the informants and the research literature suggests that Sweden’s current division of responsibilities within the administration of asylum-seekers and refugees as disadvantageous for a successful establishment. The informant from the Swedish Red Cross recognises that the administration for establishing an asylum-seeker or a refugee begins at first when a residence permit is given. As this informant represents one of the largest non-governmental organisations engaged within the establishment of this group, this statement can be considered legitimate. This leads to follow-up through an in-depth interview with the Swedish Migration Agency in future research on the topic, especially since there is a fairly large share of the total asylum-claims that result in a positive decision. Could this be an overlapping field where immigration policy and immigrant policy fail to cooperate, resulting in a delayed or even failed establishment? In addition, the relationship between smaller and larger municipalities becomes interesting, as a national immigration policy might not be sufficiently applicable on smaller municipalities with very limited resources for the immigrant policy budget. As the immigration policy initially is governed on national (and European) level, while the administration of the immigrant policy and the establishment is governed on a local level, the roles of each governance level and the available tools they have at their disposal creates a complex administrational system with split responsibilities that becomes difficult to clarify for both asylum-seekers, refugees and observers. Furthermore, the current system is not fully transparent, which further complicates the overview picture for stakeholders within the system, preventing
them from obtaining a holistic view. The lack of transparency, however, might be a necessity concerning the fact that the individuals within the system might need their personal information and whereabouts kept secret. An interesting result from this theme of discussion is that several informants (including the free-market think-tank) in general are positive to an increased responsibility from the state.

The division of roles between different governmental levels and the support from the non-profit sector appears to be crucial for the organisation of asylum-seekers and refugees, as well as for their ability to become established. The interaction between the agencies governed by the immigrant policy and those guided by the immigration policy becomes clear at this stage. As the Swedish Migration Agency governs the flow and distribution of asylum-seekers, the municipalities to a greater extent handle the establishment process. However, it appears that the municipalities approach the topic of housing provision for this group in varied ways. Judging by the data collected and presented in Table 6, it is evident that the municipalities’ efforts have increased during the period 2005-2014, especially the amount of municipalities who have regular collaboration with the public housing companies. Each of the informants emphasises the importance of a satisfactory interrelationship between the public sector and non-profit organisations. Based on the comprehensive literature studied on housing for asylum-seekers and refugees, the role of non-profit organisations is not mentioned explicitly, except in studies on Italy, where the government increasingly delegates their initial responsibilities to non-profit organisations. The remaining research accentuates the importance of informal social networks. The only exception is the literature studying social housing in Denmark (cf. Skifter Andersen 2010a, 2013; Scanlon & Vestergaard 2007), which describe these associations as non-profits. The importance of non-profits, such as the Swedish Red Cross, can be explained as complementary to the governmental agencies’ administration and therefore crucial for immigrants’ establishment. These results naturally pose some follow-up questions: What are the informal divisions of mandates between public and non-profits? What improvements might be found in the borderland between formal bureaucracy and the informal sectors? What ideologies and policies are the driving forces behind this relationship? Further research on this topic might provide a comprehensive analysis of immigrant housing and the role of non-profits in a fair context.

The structural discrimination of asylum-seekers and refugees on the housing market are visible in all of the compared countries, however on different governance levels. The examples from Denmark and Sweden address the issue of overcrowded accommodations, which can be expected to be more frequently occurring for asylum-seekers, refugees and other immigrants in comparison with the general population. In the United Kingdom, the excluding housing policy for asylum-seekers (e.g. no entitlement to allowance or social housing) is in relation to the general policy for poor households (cf. Stephens et al 2010) indeed an interesting contrast, as the general policy does not explicitly address the heterogeneity within and among the disadvantaged groups on the housing market. In Italy, some landlords and housing companies put up certain quotas determining the share of immigrants allowed in their stock. In the United Kingdom, asylum-seekers are not entitled to any facilitating circumstances during their temporary stay. In Denmark, the asylum-seekers and refugees have allowances dependent on the will of the municipal placement policies. In Sweden, the immigrant policy have a history of linking allowances to the choice of residence (EBO or ABO),
and also, and since recently, the placement policy aims to link the residence to where job opportunities are available.

Judging by the result from several of the informants representing the Swedish Red Cross, FORES, Timbro and the National Board of Housing, Planning and Building, it appears that discrimination and overcrowding is an issue in Sweden as well. The option of choosing your initial residence as an asylum-seeker appears to be accepted as a liberal idea. However, it might result in both overcrowding accommodations as well as being an obstacle for the “hosting” immigrants’ own establishment. The reflections caught by Holmgren, Rehnvall, Bergström, Sahlén and Sjelvgren can be linked to the hypothesis of spatial mismatch, which emphasises the discrimination related to the housing market (e.g. Ihlanfeldt & Sjöquist 1998). As immigrants face obstacles when attempting to access the housing market they are forced to segregate in enclaves. In turn, these enclaves may be geographically misplaced in relation to the possible opportunities of employment. On the other hand, this clustering effect could in one sense be considered as a rational choice, since immigrants who are more established naturally become the source of both information and support the newly arrived ones. However, Edin, Fredriksson and Åslund argues that immigrants living in enclaves may be disadvantageous compared to otherwise similar immigrants who have evaded the discrimination on the housing market, thus meaning that it is not the enclaves themselves that hampers the entrance to the domestic labour market but that the enclaves might be located far away from the opportunities of employment (Edin et al. 2000:20p). By relating the hypothesis of spatial mismatch to the Establishment act put in force in 2010, this highlights an interesting dysfunctional relationship between labour and housing market, which, despite its initial intentions to better match the establishment of immigrants, is not designed for asylum-seekers and refugees. This mismatch is also recognised in Italy, where the research literature suggests that immigrants tend to settle in areas where employment is available, rather than areas of high unemployment. Through the individual perspective, this might be considered a rational choice in the aim to become established in a host society. However, this behaviour also suggest that the desire to enter the labour market might be made at the expense of housing, in the sense that it might lead to immigrants being indirectly forced to cluster and live in overcrowded housing.

Hans Skifter Andersen (2010b) argues that in most European countries, ethnic minorities have a tendency to settle in certain parts of cities together with other immigrants, and presents two possible explanations for this: first, that it is a combination of low income together with a lack of knowledge of the housing market and discrimination; and second, that immigrants chose to settle in so called ethnic enclaves where they can find an ethnic social network to support them in their new country (Skifter Andersen 2010:281b). This phenomenon was elaborated as a theory during the early 1980’s, and was later called the spatial assimilation theory (e.g. Massey & Blakeslee 1983, Massey & Mullan 1984, and Massey & Bitterman 1985, cited in Massey 1985:94). According to Douglas Massey, the theory implies that residential segregation within mainstream society is an important outcome of socioeconomic advancement for minorities (Massey 1985:94). Furthermore, Massey argues that variables such as educational quality, health, access to employment, exposure to crime and social prestige are connected to peoples’ social and economic welfare and partly depend on where one lives; and as social status rises, minorities
attempt to convert their socio-economic accomplishments into an improved spatial position (Massey 1985:94). The results from these general theories, the interviews and the comparative research gives birth to reflections on the idea of asylum-seekers’ and refugees’ ability to choose their own accommodation, and the subsequent effects if they do. The EBO act might give the person increased liberties during the establishment period, based on the ideal perception that it facilitates the creation of larger social networks and the information-gathering of domestic housing markets, thus increasing chances to find an accommodation equal to the individual preferences. However, as the current regulations surrounding the rental market in Sweden evidently, however probably unintentionally, is suggested to exclude disadvantaged groups from acquiring a rental contract, the “natural” economic requirements for purchasing housing on the owned market also becomes a function of exclusion and delayed establishment. Since the introduction of the EBO act in 1994, the government in a sense might be able to preserve a relatively generous immigration policy and cope with fluctuations without facing the full short-term costs of accommodation centres. This resembles the critique of the EBO act made my Myrberg (2012), who questions the current situation where a large share of the short-term costs of the immigration policy is being implemented on the financial and organisational expense of municipalities (Myrberg 2012:73). In countries such as Italy and the United Kingdom, an important aspect is the probable effect that increased asylum immigration might have on the existing social housing stock, in specific the potential competition between groups of economic disadvantaged (e.g. initially poor immigrants versus the indigenous poor). This situation creates the following hypothesis: an increase in asylum immigration increases the pressure on the host country’s social housing stock, through an increase of demand (need) of an asset that is not driven by market forces, thus expecting to increase the competition between economic and socially disadvantaged groups who are unable to compete on the regular market.

Finding suitable housing is a key component of establishment for refugees and asylum-seekers. It is crucial for employment and equally a condition for a socially sustainable occupation. While it might be easier for high-income labour migrants to find a suitable accommodation, the situation for asylum-seekers and refugees appears to be different.
Figure 1. The establishment process for asylum-seekers and refugees in Sweden

By combining the concepts of immigrant policy, immigration policy and housing policy, it is possible to shed light on what could be named the process of establishment. Figure 1 illustrates an attempt to theoretically explain the establishment process for asylum-seekers and refugees, and the role of housing in a Swedish context.

Migration/Immigration (M) is the given time when an individual crosses a geographical border and request asylum in the given country, thus becoming an asylum-seeker. Establishment (E) is the indefinite state when the individual have the self-perception of being established in the host society. As E is an ongoing state, and might be perceived differently depending on who is the observer of the process,\(^\text{14}\) it is connected to the arrowhead symbol of the figure. The given time of the asylum process (AP) is followed by a residence permit (RP)\(^\text{15}\) issued by the government agency, which in turn gives the individual access to the domestic labour market (L)\(^\text{16}\). As the individual requests asylum in Sweden, the Swedish Migration Agency’s reception units provides two options of accommodation during the asylum process; Anläggningsboende\(^\text{17}\) (ABO) is the temporary accommodation provided by the Swedish Migration Agency, and Eget Boende (EBO) is the ability for the individual to find accommodation on his or her own. The individual is requested to move from ABO as soon as possible after receiving the residence permit. The discussion of the alternatives of accommodation will be developed further on. Given the variables explained above, it becomes understandable

\(^{14}\) As an observance of a process is dependent on who is actually observing it, it can be considered an exogenous variable. If the process of establishment described in Table 1 is to be developed further, E might be defined as E(O), where O represents the exogenous observer of the process. O might be the immigrant, the majority of the population, a political party, a governmental agency or a non-governmental organisation.

\(^{15}\) Asylum applicants who are denied a residence permit are not explained in this figure.

\(^{16}\) The complex issue of immigrants establishment on the labour market is not elaborated within the frame of this thesis (cf. Collier 2013 and Samers 2010).

\(^{17}\) Including ABT.
how access to housing (H) plays a crucial role within migration, the asylum process and establishment. Finally, a socio-spatial relationship exists between H and L, as an interaction between the local housing market and the local labour market would favour establishment.

The public housing sector in Sweden has a clear aim to be available for everyone, and is generally seen as the given alternative to a system of social housing. However, the results from the literature suggest that the public housing sector’s room for manoeuvre has been restricted during the last decades. Simultaneously, the development of the immigration and immigrant policies has changed the establishment conditions of asylum-seekers and refugees. The changed conditions for the public housing companies in 2011, which now obliges them to operate on a commercial basis, is a change that initially does not point in favour of refugees, asylum-seekers and other groups outside the regular housing market. The simultaneous change made within the immigrant policy, throughout the Establishment act, emphasised the matchmaking between housing and where job opportunities are available. However, as one of the informants recognises, the current housing shortage situation suggests that the matchmaking is being made from where there are vacant housing and not where there are jobs to be found. A similar interrelated change in the establishment process was made during the mid-1990s, when the government initiative right-to-buy programme made it possible for tenants living in rental housing to buy and convert their accommodations to tenant-owned housing, which have been suggested to decrease the share rental housing in the housing stock (cf. Christophers 2013, Andersson & Turner 2014). How might the increased asylum immigration from former Yugoslavia, the economic crisis, the creation of the EBO act and the conversions of rental units concur and how did it affect the possibilities for asylum-seekers and refugees to become established in Sweden? And to what extent is it relevant to keep these interrelated policy areas separated? This fragmentation of the responsibilities and divisions of roles between the stakeholders once again reveals the complexity of the immigration policy system.

It becomes inevitable to consider the many complex systems that surround asylum-seekers’ and refugees’ path to establishment. The rigidity of the housing market and the shrinking ability for the municipalities and the public housing sector to accommodate forced immigrants is clear. It is recognised in one of the interviews that there is a general attitude towards housing and labour market policies being considered as two policy areas where only minor adjustments are available. How have the many years of making minor adjustments in these separate policy area affected their overlapping fields? To what extent do policy makers within separate fields collaborate within the areas where the policy effects interact and counteract?

As mentioned in the introduction, several policy proposals were suggested by political parties before and after the end of 2014. At the time when the interviews where performed, February 2015, these policy suggestions was the hot topic of the immigrant policy debate.
Table 7. Attitudes toward policy proposals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proposal</th>
<th>Informant’s attitudes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abolish EBO</td>
<td>N N N N N N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modular housing units</td>
<td>P P P P P P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First home guarantee</td>
<td>N/A N/A N N N/A N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family immigration</td>
<td>N N N N N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deregulate rental market</td>
<td>N/A N/A P P P N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved procurement Full</td>
<td>P P N/A N/A P N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full compensation</td>
<td>P P N/A N/A P N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State provided housing</td>
<td>P P P N/A N P N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Municipal obligation</td>
<td>N N N/A N/A N N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

P= Positive, N=Negative, N/A=Neither or No Answer
Source: Imner (2015)

The informants’ attitudes to the political parties’ policy proposals were discussed in the interviews. Table 7 describes a simplified overview of the interviewer’s interpretation of the informants’ attitudes to each of the policy proposals. On one hand, these reactions might leave the reader with a wide range of different impressions. On the other, there are two policy proposals where the informants agree. Each of the informants is negative to the idea of abolishing the EBO act and to further restrict family immigration (reunification), likewise are they positive to the idea of modular housing units. The remainder of the results show separate attitudes. In general, the cells labelled N/A consist of reflections made by the informants, without them explicitly being positive or negative. The main purpose with the illustration in table 7 is not to generate an argument on who is right and who is wrong. Instead, this might show as a reminder on the complexity of the issue of housing for asylum-seekers and refugees. A combination of table 7 and the previous section Attitudes towards policy proposals, where the informants reflects on the proposals, might provide a guide to how different stakeholders interpret policy proposals differently. Likewise, it might nuance the perspectives on each proposal. The reactions to the proposals also give a hint to how each proposal might affect and overlap the related policy areas. This can be illustrated by the proposal to restrict family immigration (reunification) to be possible only when the refugee is established in the host society. With a housing market structure that does not provide access on equal terms, this policy might not achieve its intentional goal. Similar reflections can be made by the proposal to deregulate the rental market. How might a deregulation of rent levels affect the initial conditions for the groups that do not have access to the regular market? Should they be accounted for through the construction of social housing, modular unit housing or receive more generous grants in

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18 Disclaimer: As the political climate changes and develops, stakeholders might tend to change positions. The statements of the stakeholders are their own (Appendix 3). The interpretation of their attitudes (Table 7) is independently made by the interviewer.
order to facilitate establishment? It is true that each of these policy proposals require equal attention and in-depth study in order to reveal the multiple layers of a policy as well as the subsequent social, economic, political and environmental effects. However, it becomes crucial to understand the background for each proposal. Likewise, it is important to note from whom the policy proposal comes from and how the following attitudes might shift depending on who is the sender. This also becomes the foundation of which the critique of the policy proposals should be formulated and what different stakeholders that becomes directly and indirectly affected by it. As the framework of the national policies might collide with European framework directives and with the practical administration within the policy, it becomes crucial to formulate critique against the policies through a holistic perspective. Here, each of the stakeholders involved within immigration, immigrant and housing policies, as well as the related policy areas, has an essential responsibility to formulate their critique.

In general, the topic of asylum-seekers’ and refugees’ entitlement to host societies welfare programmes might be considered rather sensitive in the current political climate in Sweden. As the political climate changes, it suddenly might become reprehensible to talk about assimilation of immigrants, while instead favouring the use of the term integration. But how often do these terms become mixed up? The discussion highlighting of asylum-seekers’ and refugees’ unsustainable housing situations is increasingly becoming an issue of political focus. As the regular housing market is unable to contribute to the favourable joint adaption that is definition of integration, the persistent use of this term instantly becomes blunt. With the current policies of immigration and housing, asylum-seekers and refugees are required to assimilate in order to become part of the housing market. As such, it might be advisable to formulate the general perception of this issue: sufficient housing market integration is the policy goal, but insufficient housing market assimilation describes the current situation.
7. Conclusion

Asylum-seekers’ and refugees’ establishment in a host country are mainly influenced by European and national immigrant policies. The research gathered and analysed in this thesis emphasises the great influence of domestic housing policies in asylum-seekers- and refugees’ establishment process in Sweden. Each of the compared countries has barriers that restrict immigrants from becoming established on the housing market. However, these barriers take different shapes and are set up on different levels.

Despite the Swedish public housing sector’s aim to be available for everyone, it appears that their general policy might be too general, thus failing to include disadvantaged groups such as asylum-seekers and refugees. The flaws of this general system are instead handled by attempting to include this group through the immigrant policy. However, the immigrant policy does not directly influence the housing policy. The main finding in this thesis suggests that the immigration policy, the immigrant policy and the housing policy are handled by separate systems governing different, yet overlapping, stages of the asylum-seekers’ and the refugees’ establishment process. Additionally, this process is being administrated on separate levels by separate stakeholders (such as governmental agencies, officials, politicians, and non-profits) with different interests and priorities. These stakeholders appear to be indirectly steered by each other’s part in the process, but only to a limited extent able to directly influence each other.

In the comparative analysis between Sweden, Italy, the United Kingdom and Denmark, the structural exclusion of asylum-seekers and refugees are visible, however on different governance levels. Despite the evidence of Sweden having a relatively generous immigration policy, it is clear that a maladjusted domestic housing policy can be used as a regulator. The ability for asylum-seekers to choose their own accommodation is an attractive choice, but also mainly dependant on the availability of a domestic rental housing stock that allows them to enter it on socially, economically and spatially accepted conditions. Similar circumstances apply for the policy proposal to condition family migration only when the person living in the host country has arranged a tolerable accommodation, as well as the changed conditions for public housing companies to operate on a commercial basis. These examples provide a general conclusion of how housing policy may serve as the beginning and the end of a successful establishment. This unfortunate outcome might possibly be a an unintentional consequence of isolated attempts to tackle the two overlapping phenomena of migration and housing, which in turn call for the consideration of either a national or a common European immigrant housing policy.

By comparing the overlapping phenomena of migration and housing policy, focusing on asylum-seekers’ and refugees’ conditions on the housing market, I hope to have contributed to an increased understanding of their unique conditions in attempting to become established, as well as the heterogeneity within immigrants as a group. For practitioners, I hope that my contribution serve as a supplement to the well-established public debate that combine the immigrant and labour market policies. However, the comparison of the concepts of migration and housing in Sweden through qualitative interviews and a comparative analysis still needs more in-depth and interdisciplinary research.
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Qualitative interviews
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Rostedt, Annelie, Development Manager, County Administrative Board of Stockholm, Interviewed: February 26th 2015.
Sahlén, Malin, Project Manager Integration, Timbro, Interviewed: February 19th 2015.

Other sources
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19 This source will only be provided on request.
9. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Informants

*The Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions* (Sveriges Kommuner och Landsting) is an employers’ organisation and an organisation that advocates for local government in Sweden. Currently, all of Sweden’s municipalities, county councils and regions are members of the organisation.

*The Swedish Red Cross* (Svenska Röda Korset) is an international humanitarian non-governmental organisation consisting mainly out of volunteers, financed mainly by contributions from fundraising, grants and membership fees. The Swedish Red Cross is engaged in disaster preparedness, support to asylum-seekers and refugees, aid for undocumented migrants and torture victims. They also train volunteers in first aid, social work and international law. 20

*The Swedish National Board of Housing, Building and Planning* (Boverket) is a central government authority regulated by a general instruction issued by the Swedish parliament. The main field of activities consists of analysing the housing market, issuing building regulations, supervising local, regional and national planning. 21

*FORES – Forum for Reforms, Entrepreneurship and Sustainability* describes themselves as a green liberal think-thank engaged in issues concerning the environment, migration and integration and digitalisation. FORES was founded in 2007 by the liberal institute Bertil Ohlin-institutet and the liberal education institute Studieförbundet Vuxenskolan, together with the Center Party. 22

*Timbro* is a market-liberal think-thank and a book publisher, founded in 1978 the former Swedish employer’ organisation SAF (today: The Confederation of Swedish Enterprise/Svenskt Näringsliv). Timbro claims that their mission is “to originate, promote and disseminate ideas and issues supporting the principles of free markets, free enterprise, individual liberty and a free society”. 23

The County Administrative Board of Stockholm is the representative of the government and the coordinating body for state activities in the Stockholm County. The County Administrative Boards works mainly with issues concerning integration, environment, nature, labour market, competence sourcing, business community, social development, animal protection, gender equality, transport, infrastructure and housing. 24

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24 [http://www.lansstyrelsen.se/stockholm/En/Pages/default.aspx][9], [http://sv.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stockholms_L%C3%A4n][10]
Appendix 2 – Interview guide and themes for discussion

1. How do you interpret the concept of integration?
2. What is the role of housing within the political ambition to increase integration?
3. What role should the public sector have in order to facilitate the establishment of asylum-seekers and refugees?
4. What role should the non-profit/voluntary sector have in order to facilitate the establishment of asylum-seekers and refugees?
5. What is your view of the current division of roles between state and municipality regarding the issue of housing provision during the asylum period and after a granted residence permit?
6. What are the strengths and weaknesses of EBO and ABO? Are there any alternative solutions?
7. What are the obstacles faced by asylum-seekers and refugees on the housing market?
8. How has the act Etableringslagen affected the possibilities of establishment on the housing market?
9. According to the act Lag om kommunernas bostadsansvar, the municipalities should plan the housing supply in order to create the conditions for everyone in the municipality to live in good homes. How will the municipalities be able to meet the purpose of the act?
10. Can demands on revenue and employment from landlords constitute an obstacle for a successful establishment?
11. How can the municipalities’ efforts to provide housing for asylum-seekers and immigrants be facilitated?
12. Who should provide accommodation for people with a large need but small ability to request housing?
13. Should the public sector focus on financial assistance or to build own housing in order to facilitate for disadvantaged groups? Are there any alternative solutions?
14. How can financial aid for housing affect the establishment?
15. In similar countries social housing is used in order to construct housing that can be used by disadvantaged groups. Is this an alternative in Sweden?
16. In the winter of 2014/2015 there were several integration policy proposals presented by the political parties. What is your perception of the proposals regarding housing policy?
   a. Abolishment of the EBO act.
   b. Modular housing units
   c. First-accommodation guarantee.
   d. Family migration made possible only when the person living in Sweden has housing, employment and a steady income.
   e. Market-set rent.
   f. An improved procurement of housing for asylum-seekers.
   g. Full financial compensation to the municipalities.
   h. Asylum housing operated by the Swedish Migration Agency.
   i. Force the municipalities to be prepared to receive newly arrived immigrants.

25 The questions are translated from Swedish to English. Although these questions formed the interviews, the structure of the transcriptions might differ.
Appendix 3 – Interview transcriptions

Intervju 1
Karin Perols
Sveriges Kommuner & Landsting
Intervjuad den 9 februari 2015, kl. 15.00 – 16.30.
Avståmd den 14 april 2015 via e-post.

Karin Perols är utredare på Sveriges Kommuner & Landstings (SKL) avdelning för Lärande och Arbetsmarknad, där hon särskilt arbetar med frågor som rör kommunernas flykting- och asylmottagande. Arbetsuppgifterna består bland annat i att bevaka kommunernas intressen i frågan samt att vara stödfunktion i kommunernas dagliga arbete. Det innebär att Karin Perols tolkar regelverk, organiserar nätverksträffar och tar fram underlag. Karin Perols är även en av huvudförfattarna till SKL:s åtgärdsförslag ”Ett hållbart asyl- och flyktingmottagande, 35 förslag”.

1. Vad är din tolkning av begreppet integration?

2. Vilken roll spelar bostaden för den politiska målsättningen att öka integrationen?

3. Vilken roll bör det offentliga ha för att underlätta nyanländas etablering?
4. Vilken roll bör ideell verksamhet ha?
Samspel mellan offentlig och ideell verksamhet är ett jätteintressant utvecklingsområde, framförallt med tanke på sådana värden som det offentliga inte kan stå för. I andra länder som Tyskland och England har kyrkan en större roll, och har det genom statlig ersättning. I Sverige är det helt annorlunda.

5. Hur ser du på den nuvarande rollfördelningen mellan stat och kommun i fråga om bostadsförsörjning för nyanlända under asyltiden och vid beviljat uppehållstillstånd?

Under asyltiden

Efter uppehållstillstånd
Om de med beviljat uppehållstillstånd vill ordna eget boende behöver
kommuner använda bostadsförsörjning som en planeringsåtgärd. Det är svårt att ha med i sin bostadsförsörjningsplan. Vi måste ha med detta i den långsiktiga planeringen, särskilt med tanke på att vi sällan kan förutså hva som ska hända i vissa krig eller kriser. Just nu är det osäkert med tanke på vad som händer i omvärlden.

6. Vilka styrkor respektive svagheter ser du hos EBO respektive ABO? Finns det alternativa lösningar?

**EBO**


**ABO**


7. Vilka hinder möter nyanlända när de vill etablera sig på bostadsmarknaden?


8. Hur har Etableringslagen (SFS 2010:197) påverkat nyanländas etableringsmöjligheter på bostadsmarknaden?

Frågan har redan besvarats.

9. I lagen om kommunernas bostadsansvar (2000:1383) står att kommunen ska planera bostadsförsörjningen i syfte att skapa förutsättningar för alla i
kommunen att leva i goda bostäder. Hur får kommunerna möjlighet att leva upp till lagens syfte?
Jag arbetar inte med den här frågan.

10. Kan inkomst- och anställningskrav från hyresvärdar utgöra ett hinder för etablering?
Hyresvärdar ställer ofta krav på jobb och inkomst. Det sker även diskriminering på bostadsmarknaden. Men det stora problemet är bostadsbristen i sig.

11. En statlig utredning (SOU 2003:75) har pekat på att kommuner är bekymrade över att de får ansvaret för att lösa bostadsfrågan för en person som fått uppehållstillstånd. Hur kan kommunernas arbete med bostadsförsörjning för nyanlända underlättas?

12. Vem ska tillgodose boende för människor med stort behov men liten möjlighet att efterfråga en bostad?
Jag arbetar inte med den här frågan.

Jag kan inte svara på den här frågan.

14. En person med etableringsersättning som bor ensam i en egen bostad och är folkbokförd där kan få bostadsersättning från Försäkringskassan. Hur kan ett försörjningsstöd påverka etableringen?

15. I många andra länder är s.k. social housing ett angreppssätt för att bygga billigare bostäder som kan efterfrågas av ekonomiskt svagare hushåll. Är detta ett alternativ i Sverige?
Jag kan inte svara på den här frågan.

16. Under vintern 2014/2015 skedde flera integrationspolitiska utspel från flera riksdagspartier. Vad är din uppfattning av de förslag som rör bostadspolitik?

   a. Ett avskaffande av EBO-lagen.
   SKL säger nej till att avskaffa EBO-lagen men vill revidera genom att ebo ska uppfylla vissa krav för att godkännas. Att dra in ersättningen så

b. **Modulbostäder med statliga hyresgarantier och tidsbegränsade bygglov.**

c. **Första boende-garanti.**
   Den stora frågan handlar snarare om att underlätta planeringen för flyktingmottagandet och fördelningen över landet av asylsökande och flyktingar.

d. **Möjliggörande av anhörsinvandring först när den personen som bor i Sverige uppfyller försörjningskrav, regelbunden inkomst och bostad.**

e. **Friare hyressättning.**
   Jag kan inte svara på den här frågan.

f. **Förbättrad upphandling för asylboenden.**
   Frågan har redan besvarats.

g. **Full ekonomisk kompensation till kommunerna.**

h. **Asylboenden drivna i egen regi av Migrationsverket.**
   Ett bra förslag. De kan drivas av det offentliga och man har en större grundorganisation. Det bör fortfarande vara möjligt med upphandling i ”toppen”.

i. **Gör kommuner skyldiga att ha beredskap för nyanlända.**
   Gunnar Hedberg och Lars Stjernqvist, en av regeringens utredare i frågan, rekommenderar ingen tvångslagstiftning men krav på beredskap. Det är svårt att se vad en sådan skyldighet skulle innebära i praktiken. Det är mycket bättre att inriktas sig på samarbete. I första hand måste
förutsättningarna vad gäller ersättningar, samverkan och bosättningsfrågor bli bättre.

17. Vad kännetecknar en fungerande bostadsmarknad?
Den kännetecknas av en bättre balans mellan utbud och efterfrågan. Det måste finnas boenden att efterfråga för personer som är nya på bostadsmarknaden.

Intervju 2
Ida Holmgren
Sakkunnig Migration och Integration, Svenska Röda Korset
Intervjuad den 11 februari 2015, kl. 16.30 – 18.15.
Avstämd den 13 mars 2015 via e-post.

Ida Holmgren är sakkunnig i migration och integration på Svenska Röda Korset, där hon särskilt arbetar med frågor som rör asylmottagande och etablering genom påverkansarbete och opinionsbildning. Ida Holmgren beskriver de Svenska Röda Korsets volontärer som organisationens viktigaste verktyg för att skapa en samhällsförändring positiv för migranter.

1. Vad är din tolkning av begreppet integration?

2. Vilken roll spelar bostaden för den politiska målsättningen att öka integrationen?

3. Vilken roll bör det offentliga ha för att underlätta nyanländas etablering?
Integrationspolitiken är bra beskriven, i den bemärkelsen att det egentligen inte ska behöva finnas speciella integrationsinsatser annat än som stöd under den första tiden i landet. Det enda speciella med nyanlända är just att de är nyanlända, vilket är en klok formulering. Under en kort period måste samhället sätta in extra resurser för nyanlända för att dessa människor ska kunna vara del av samhället på samma villkor, här har samhället en avgörande roll.

4. Vilken roll bör ideell verksamhet ha för att underlätta nyanländas etablering?
Vi ser oss som ett komplement, vilket även är vår viktigaste roll som organisation. Vi innehaver en stödjande roll gentemot myndigheterna, dock är vi självständiga. Den här frågan är intressant då det har varit ett ökat fokus på att civilsamhället ska spela en större roll, till exempel genom möjliggörandet av etableringslotsar. Den ideella verksamhetens roll som komplement är viktig där


som kan utnytta en situation. Vem är det man bor hos? Jo, ofta är det någon som själv är ny i Sverige och vill integreras.

7. ** Vilka hinder möter nyanlända när de vill etablera sig på bostadsmarknaden?**

8. **Hur har Etableringslagen (SFS 2010:197) påverkat nyanländas etableringsmöjligheter på bostadsmarknaden?**

9. **I lagen om kommunernas bostadsansvar (2000:1383) står att kommunen ska planera bostadsförsörjningen i syfte att skapa förutsättningar för alla i kommunen att leva i goda bostäder. Hur får kommunerna möjlighet att leva upp till lagens syfte?**

10. **Kan inkomst- och anställningskrav från hyresvärdar utgöra ett hinder för etablering?**
    Ja! Detta är en diskussion om vad som kommer först, hönan eller ägget. Spiralen jobb och bostad skapar ett moment 22.

11. **En statlig utredning (SOU 2003:75) har pekat på att kommuner är bekymrade över att de får ansvaret för att lösa bostadsfrågan för en person som fått uppehållstillstånd. Hur kan kommunernas arbete med bostadsförsörjning för nyanlända underlättas?**
    Egentligen handlar det om en havererad bostadsförsörjning för alla, som sätts på

12. **Vem ska tillgodose boende för människor med stort behov men liten möjlighet att efterfråga en bostad?**


13. **Ska det offentliga fokusera på ekonomiskt stöd eller att bygga bostäder i egen regi för att underlätta för utsatta grupper? Finns det alternativa lösningar? Vilka marknadmässiga lösningar finns?**

Jag kan inte svara på den här frågan.

14. **Hur kan ett försörjningsstöd påverka etableringen?**

Det kan bidra till att man har möjlighet att ha en egen bostad. En trygg bostadsrelation är ett fundament för hälsa och arbete, så försörjningsstöd underlättar det situationen.

15. **I många andra länder är s.k. social housing ett angreppssätt för att bygga billigare bostäder som kan efterfrågas av ekonomiskt svagare hushåll. Är detta ett alternativ i Sverige?**

Anledningen till att denna debatt har seglat upp är att det på många orter inte längre finns en allmännytt. När vi hade allmännyttan fanns inte det behovet. Vi hade en lösning som fungerade.

16. **Under vintern 2014/2015 skedde flera integrationspolitiska utspel från flera riksdagspartier. Vad är din uppfattning av de förslag som rör bostadspolitik?**

   a. **Ett avskaffande av EBO-lagen.**

   Se svar på fråga 6.

   b. **Modulbostäder med statliga hyresgarantier och tidsbegränsade bygglov.**


   c. **Första boende-garanti.**

   Innan etableringslagen jobbade kommuner på så sätt. Egentligen behöver det inte vara en ekonomisk kostnad, oftast kan man betala hyran. Men
d. Möjliggörande av anhöriginvandring först när den personen som bor i Sverige uppfyller försörjningskrav, regelbunden inkomst och bostad.

e. Friare hyressättning.
Jag kan inte svara på den här frågan.

f. Förbättrad upphandling för asylboenden.
Det är en oerhört viktigt fråga av alla möjliga skäl. Myndigheter måste ha kontroll över var boenden öppnas. Migrationsverket ska självta kunna driva boenden, måste man bli förvånad varje gång antalet nyanlända ökar?

g. Full ekonomisk kompensation till kommunerna.

h. Asylboenden drivna i egen regi av Migrationsverket.

i. Gör kommuner skyldiga att ha beredskap för nyanlända.
Det är viktigt för människor som kommer hit att de är välkomna och att
17. Vad kännetecknar en fungerande bostadsmarknad?
Det enkla svaret är att det finns tillgängliga bostäder för alla oavsett livsvillkor. Det är obegripligt att situationen idag är så låst. Om vi inte kan lösa det genom politik, hur ska det då gå?

Intervju 3
Anders Sjelvgren
Avdelningschef, Boverket
Intervjuad den 13 februari 2015, kl. 08.30 – 09.30.
Avstängd den 12 mars 2015 via e-post.


1. Vad är din tolkning av begreppet integration?
   Människan ska bli en del av vårt samhälle, från att stå utanför till att vara del i det. Man behöver inte vara lika men man ska känna sig inkluderad.

2. Vilken roll spelar bostaden för den politiska målsättningen att öka integrationen?

3. Vilken roll bör det offentliga ha för att underlätta nyanländas etablering?
   Jag tror att staten måste ta en större roll, då nyanlända är en svag grupp i samhället. Det är en känslig fråga om social housings vara eller icke vara, men något måste göras för de som inte kan röra sig på marknaden eller vara köpare. Egentligen har vi redan social housing men under namnet sociala kontrakt. Allmännyttans affärsmässiga verksamhet kan ha gjort att fler hamnar utanför.

4. Vilken roll bör ideell verksamhet ha?

5. Hur ser du på den nuvarande rollfördelningen mellan stat och kommun i fråga om bostadsförsörjning för nyanlända under asyltiden och vid beviljat uppehållstillstånd?
Det är inte rimligt att frågan helt läggs i kommunernas knän. Om nationen Sverige säger att den åtar sig att ta emot ett visst antal nyanlända, då måste staten även ta ansvar för det, det är min privata uppfattning. Idag kan det skapa långsiktiga problem, de som tagit emot många flyktingar kanske inte borde ha tagit emot så många, ibland kan skälen varit att rädda sitt kommunala bostadsbolag inte om man kan integra de antal man tagit emot. ? Men mottagandet kan ske av andra skäl, till exempel hade många glesbygder tidigare ett överskott av bostäder och kunde rädda sina allmännyttiga bolag genom att hyra ut bostäder till nyanlända. Idag har inte längre kommunala bolag ett överskott på bostäder, därför är det viktigt med statens ansvar.

6. Vilka styrkor respektive svagheter ser du hos EBO respektive ABO? Finns det alternativa lösningar?

EBO
Eget boende bygger på att det finns en bostadsmarknad som fungerar, så vad gör vi om den inte finns? I dagsläget fungerar inte EBO. EBO är en god tanke och en drivkraft, men det måste fungera bättre.

ABO
Anläggningsboende erbjuds ofta i områden där människor inte vill hamna, vilket får fler att välja EBO. I sin tur ökar det antalet som registrerar sig på boxadresser eller bor med för många andra i en lägenhet.

7. Vilka hinder möter nyanlända när de vill etablera sig på bostadsmarknaden?

Eftersom det finns ett överflöd av kunder på bostadsmarknaden, är man intresserad av de kunder som har högst betalningsförmåga. Kan man stärka hyresgarantier för att stilla fastighetsägares oro? Fastighetsägare är oroade över att deras bostäder blir EBOadresser och att slitaget ökar på grunda av att många människor bor ihop.

8. Hur har Etableringslagen (SFS 2010:197) påverkat nyanländas etableringsmöjligheter på bostadsmarknaden?

Jag tycker inte att uppdraget att matcha bostäder är en naturlig uppgift för Arbetsförmedlingen.


Om vi tittar på marknadsförutsättningarna så är det ändå inte lätt att tillgodose bostäder. Vi har satt en lag men finns förutsättningarna? Kommunerna har ambitionerna att lösa det, till exempel med sociala kontrakt, men det är inte så enkelt. De kan sätta ågadirektiv till allmännyttan men samtidigt ska det vara på affärsmissägg villkor. I Holland och Frankrike prövas nu två fall om allmännyttans möjlighet att frångå villkoren. Nu väntar vi på en dom i EU-

80
domstolen.


12. Under vintern 2014/2015 skedde flera integrationspolitiska utspel från flera riksdagspartier. Vad är din uppfattning av de förslag som rör bostadspolitik?

   a. Ett avskaffande av EBO-lagen.
      Man kan inte avskaffa EBO utan att presentera ett alternativ

   b. Modulbostäder med statliga hyresgarantier och tidsbegränsade bygglov.
      Det är en bra idé. Det skulle vara en kortsiktig lösning att komplettera det långsiktiga.

   c. Första boende-garanti.
      En bra idé. Det komplexa är att kommunen kan säga att nyanlända får förtur. Därför är det viktigt att analysera vilka spänningar i samhället som skapas av olika förslag.

   d. Möjliggörande av anhöriginvandring först när den personen som bor i Sverige uppfyller försörjningskrav, regelbunden inkomst och bostad.
      Man ska inte blanda ihop asylrätten med etableringen, det är skilda frågor.

   e. Friare hyressättning.
      Jag tror att det är ett alternativ. Idag är det så stor skillnad på vad marknaden är villig att betala och vad det faktiskt kostar. Det bör följa med både upp och ner i ett varierat bestånd.

   f. Förbättrad upphandling för asylboenden.
behöver inte ta lägsta pris om man är tydlig i kravställandet.

g. **Full ekonomisk kompensation till kommunerna.**

h. **Asylboenden drivna i egen regi av Migrationsverket.**
   Det är bra för att hålla en basvolym, som kan kompletteras genom att köpa in toppar. Samtidigt kan marknaden jobba med fluktuationerna.

i. **Gör kommuner skyldiga att ha beredskap för nyanlända.**

13. **Vad kännetecknar en fungerande bostadsmarknad?**

**Intervju 4**
Anna Rehnvall
Programchef Migration och Integration
Andreas Bergström
Vice VD och chef för Ekonomiska reformer

*Intervjuade den 17 februari 2015, kl. 14.00 – 15.30.*
*Avstämd den 7 april 2015*

Anna Rehnvall och Andreas Bergström arbetar på den gröna och liberala tankesmedjan Fores (Forum for Reforms, Entrepreneurships and Sustainability). Inom migrationsområdet driver Fores hemsidan [www.migrationsinfo.se](http://www.migrationsinfo.se) där de sammanställer offentlig statistik om migration. Inom ramen för programmet Migration och Integration anordnas seminarier, delta i den mediala och politiska debatten samt publicera böcker och forskningsrapporter. Intervjun skedde i ostrukturerad form på olika teman inom ämnena migration, integration och etablering. Det är i huvudsak Anna Rehnvall som svarar på frågorna och diskuterar inom de presenterade ämnesområden, om inte annat anges.

1. **En särskild politik för nyanlända**
   Det finns en särskild insider-/outsiderproblematik kring etablering för nyanlända, såväl som för andra ekonomiskt utsatta grupper. Här finns även en politisk tendens att utföra riktade insatser för utsatta grupper, i detta fall efter som de kan sakna kunskap om språket eller information om hur vissa samhällsinstitutioner fungerar.

2. **Boendesituationen idag**
   Var och hur man bor spelar roll för utanförskapet, men vad är uppfattningen av

3. Det offentligas och det ideellas roll

Anna Rehnvall menar att den ideella verksamheten har stor potential och en möjlighet att vara lokalt förankrat. Personer med stora lokala nätverk är viktiga här. Kanadas integrationsarbete är intressant att titta närmre på, där upphandlar staten civilsamhällesaktörer i sin tur får en större roll i etableringen.

4. Etablering för nyanlända
Vi upplever det som att det finns en generell inställning kring de stora frågorna arbetsmarknads- och bostadspolitik som innebär att det bara går att småskruva. Det är positivt att flyktinginvandringen är så pass stor att politikerna äntligen tar tag i frågan, men det är inte invandringen som har skapat bostadsmarknadens problem. Det korta perspektivet är viktigt i dagsläget, därför är modulbostäder en intressant lösning.

En del av Etableringslagen gav föreningar möjlighet att gå in som etableringslotsar, att vara en mellanhand som hjälper till med det ena och det andra. Här har utbildningsföretagen tagit en stor roll. Det kan även ge den nyanlända en möjlighet att lära känna orten, och ett lokalt företag kan ge mycket som inte staten kan komma med. De lokala företagarna spelar en stor roll.

5. Under vintern 2014/2015 skedde flera integrationspolitiska utspel från flera riksdagspartier. Vad är er uppfattning av de förslag som rör bostadspolitik?

a. Ett avskaffande av EBO-lagen.
Möjligheten att välja att ordna ett eget boende är en viktig liberal princip. Det kan vara så att grundprincipen är att människor ska kunna välja var de bor, men det kan komma till den punkt då man måste frångå den möjligheten när alla andra alternativ är uttömda. Men om man inte vet vad som är det rätta svaret på ett samhällsproblem måste man gå på det
alternativet som ger människor störst handlingsfrihet. Ett avskaffande av EBO-lagen skulle sannolikt ge flera följdpå. Ett ”Godkänt Eget Boende” (GEBO) är en intressant tanke, där det egna boendet måste godkännas av ett kontrollorgan. Idag existerar det en spänning mellan kommun och stat i denna fråga. Ett intressant inspel i debatten är att forskaren Gunnar Myrberg är kritisk till EBO-lagen.

b. Modulbostäder med statliga hyresgarantier och tidsbegränsade bygglov.
Se svar på punkt 4.

c. Möjliggörande av anhöriginvandring först när den personen som bor i Sverige uppfyller försörjningskrav, regelbunden inkomst och bostad.
För att kunna bilda en stark uppfattning skulle vi behöva få fram mer exakta siffror, samt se vilken effekt det verkligen skulle få om dessa förändringar genomfördes. En diskussion är att man kan begränsa en del av anhöriginvandringen och ändå (i strikt mening) följa de konventioner som Sverige följer (som till exempel nyetablerad anknytning), men att det inte är självklart att vi måste gå på mininivån av vad dessa konventioner innehåller, eftersom det finns andra värden och principer som kan vara viktigare. Vi har redan gjort en hel del tillägg till de konventioner och EU-lagstiftning som finns genom Utlänningslagen vilket i praktiken ger ett generösare system.

d. Friare hyressättning.
Det är en i grunden bra idé, men den löser inte problemet för nyanlända och låginkomsttagare.

e. Asylboenden drivna i egen regi av Migrationsverket.

**Intervju 5**
Malin Sahlén
Programansvarig Arbetsmarknad & Integration, Timbro
Intervjuad den 19 februari 2015, kl. 10.00 – 11.15.
Avstämd den 24 mars 2015.

1. **Vad är din tolkning av begreppet integration?**

2. **Vilken roll spelar bostaden för den politiska målsättningen att öka integrationen?**
   Bostaden är central. Om du är bostadslös är det i princip omöjligt att hitta arbete, dels av sociala skäl. De flesta har ett slags boende på ett eller annat sätt. Tillgång till bostad måste finnas för att man ska kunna fungera som människa.

3. **Vilken roll bör det offentliga ha för att underlätta nyanländas etablering?**

4. **Vilken roll bör ideell verksamhet ha för att underlätta nyanländas etablering?**

5. **Hur ser du på den nuvarande rollfördelningen mellan stat och kommun i fråga om bostadsförsörjning för nyanlända under asyltiden och vid beviljat uppehållstillstånd?**

   **Under asyltiden**

   **Efter uppehållstillstånd**
   Vid ett beviljat uppehållstillstånd är det rimligt att komma till kommuner för att integrera sig i samhället. Om det initiala ansvaret för kommunen försvinner kan de engagera sig mer i det andra skedet.

6. **Vilka styrkor respektive svagheter ser du hos EBO respektive ABO? Finns det alternativa lösningar?**

   **EBO**
   Det ska mycket till innan man förbjuder människor från att välja själva, detta ska

**ABO**

Min spontanta reflektion är att jag skulle tro att om staten tar över ansvaret kan det underlätta för kommunernas arbete. Man kan bo i ABO under asylperioden, men det händer på att det finns andra bostäder. Idag har vi flaskhalsar på båda sidor. Återigen tror jag att modulbostäder är intressant att titta vidare på.

7. **Vilka hinder möter nyanlända när de vill etablera sig på bostadsmarknaden?**
   De möts av samma hinder som många andra som vill etablera sig på bostadsmarkanden, nämligen att det inte finns några bostäder. Vi har inte bostäder där det finns jobb och inte jobb där det finns bostäder. Givetvis förekommer också viss diskriminering, vilket är både förkastligt och olagligt.

8. **Hur har Etableringslagen (SFS 2010:197) påverkat nyanländas etableringsmöjligheter på bostadsmarknaden?**
   Pass.

9. **I lagen om kommunernas bostadsansvar (2000:1383) står att kommunen ska planera bostadsförsörjningen i syfte att skapa förutsättningar för alla i kommunen att leva i goda bostäder. Hur får kommunerna möjlighet att leva upp till lagens syfte?**

10. **Kan inkomst- och anställningskrav från hyresvärdar utgöra ett hinder för etablering?**
    Självklart. Men det är svårt att se alternativen. Det borde finnas skilda krav på allmännyttan och privata aktörer.

11. **En statlig utredning (SOU 2003:75) har pekat på att kommuner är bekymrade över att de får ansvaret för att lösa bostadsfrågan för en person som fått uppehållstillstånd. Hur kan kommunernas arbete med bostadsförsörjning för nyanlända underlättas?**
    Genom ett minskat ansvar för asylsökande kan kommunerna underlättat för de som har fått uppehållstillstånd.

12. **Vem ska tillgodose boende för människor med stort behov men liten möjlighet att efterfråga en bostad?**
    Det allmänna betalar ut ekonomiskt stöd, och så bör det förbli.


15. I många andra länder är s.k. social housing ett angreppssätt för att bygga billigare bostäder som kan efterfrågas av ekonomiskt svagare hushåll. Är detta ett alternativ i Sverige? Det låter som en möjlig lösning där marknaden är satt ur spel. Så länge marknaden inte fungerar är det intressant.

16. Under vintern 2014/2015 skedde flera integrationspolitiska utspel från flera riksdagspartier. Vad är din uppfattning av de förslag som rör bostadspolitik?


attraktivitet inte väger tyngre idag.

f. **Förbättrad upphandling för asylboenden.**
Att förbättra är så klart bra. Men upphandling är generellt en väldigt svår fråga.

g. **Full ekonomisk kompensation till kommunerna.**
Det beror på hur det hanteras. Om situationen fortsätter att se ut som i dagsläget är det en rimlig tanke.

h. **Asylboenden drivna i egen regi av Migrationsverket.**

i. **Gör kommuner skyldiga att ha beredskap för nyanlända.**

17. **Vad kännetecknar en fungerande bostadsmarknad?**

**Intervju 6**

Annelie Rostedt
Utvecklingsledare, Länsstyrelsen Stockholms län
Intervjuad den 26 februari 2015, kl. 15.30 – 16.45.
Avstämd den 15 april 2015

Annelie Rostedt är utvecklingsledare på Länsstyrelsen Stockholms län, enheten för arbetsmarknads- och rättighetsfrågor, där hon ansvarar för överenskommelser med länens kommuner kring mottagande och bosättning av nyanlända och relaterade bosättningsfrågor. Inom vårt team som arbetar med integration på länsstyrelsen arbetar kollegor med ytterligare frågor såsom överenskommelser kring ensamkommande barn, barn som försvinner, Sfi/Sfx, arbetsmarknad, samhällsorientering, hälsa, mm.

1. **Hur arbetar det offentliga för att underlätta nyanländas etablering?**
dialog med kommunerna om ett likvärdigt och rättvist mottagande.

2. Vilken roll bör ideell verksamhet ha för att underlätta nyanländas etablering?

3. Vilka styrkor respektive svagheter ser du hos EBO respektive ABO? Finns det alternativa lösningar?

EBO

ABO
Migrationsverket har svårigheter att få ABO efter behov. Ett idealty anläggningsboende är tryggt. Utmaningarna ligger i svårigheterna, så som långa handläggningstider och anläggningens geografiska placering. Studier har visat på att människor vill vara kvar i sitt närområde efter uppehållstillståndet. En nackdel med vissa ABO är möjligtvis att man blir mer isolerad, till skillnad från EBO som kan ge nya kontaktytor. Som sagt beror det på var ABO ligger och om det finns ideell verksamhet där.

4. Hur har Etableringslagen (SFS 2010:197) påverkat nyanländas etableringsmöjligheter på bostadsmarknaden?
Arbetsförmedlingen ansvarar för bosättning på anvisning, Migrationsverket för kvotflyktingar utan etableringsplan. Utöver hur bostadssituationen ser ut idag så hår det nog matchningen med arbetsmarknaden som sker utifrån var det finns bostäder. Från kommunernas sida förlorade man mycket av sitt uppdrag när Etableringslagen infördes, samtidigt som de fortfarande har ett ansvar för individerna i kommunen.

5. I lagen om kommunernas bostadsansvar (2000:1383) står att kommunen ska planera bostadsförsörjningen i syfte att skapa förutsättningar för alla i kommunen att leva i goda bostäder. Hur får kommunerna möjlighet att leva upp till lagens syfte?
Nyanlända bör vara en grupp som beaktas i planeringen av bostadsförsörjningen. Men kollegor på enheten för samhällsbyggnad arbetar mer specifikt med denna fråga.
6. Under vintern 2014/2015 skedde flera integrationspolitiska utspel från flera riksdagspartier. Vad är din uppfattning av de förslag som rör bostadspolitik?

a. Ett avskaffande av EBO-lagen.
   En avskaffning av EBO-lagen kan inte ske utan ett alternativ, det vill säga tillräckliga resurser och bra planering av anläggningsboenden. Samtidigt är det bra att människor har ett val, även om det så klart finns både positiva och negativa dimensioner.

b. Modulbostäder med statliga hyresgarantier och tidsbegränsade bygglov.

c. Första boende-garanti.
   Länsstyrelsen verkar ju för att nyanlända tas emot i kommunerna, vilket innebär en form av förtur.

d. Möjliggörande av anhöriginvandring först när den personen som bor i Sverige uppfyller försörjningskrav, regelbunden inkomst och bostad.
   Det är viktigt att inte blanda ihop asylrätten med etableringen. Detta är två helt skilda frågor.

e. Friare hyressättning.
   Pass.

f. Förbättrad upphandling för asylboenden.

g. Full ekonomisk kompensation till kommunerna.
   Pass.

h. Asylboenden drivna i egen regi av Migrationsverket.
   En ganska bra idé, detta fanns på åttioålet. Det finns en intressant radiointervju med Migrationsverkets generaldirektör där denna fråga tas upp.

i. Gör kommuner skyldiga att ha beredskap för nyanlända.
   Alla kommuner bör ta emot, men jag vet inte om detta är rätt verktyg. Det borde vara en självklar princip att det ska vara ett delat ansvar,

7. Vad kännetecknar en fungerande bostadsmarknad?
Ur mitt perspektiv handlar det om att nyanlända som målgrupp måste finnas med i planeringen. De är lika viktiga som andra grupper.
Appendix 4 – Table data

Table 1. Media exposure

The data from table 1 is based on a media analysis on combinations of certain keywords that are closely related to the subject of this thesis. The data is collected by using the media monitor Retriever. Specifically, the data is supplied through their analytical tool, which scans media sources from a wide range of information hubs. The analysis made for this thesis contains a total of 20 165 articles with the used keywords, a result made from scanning 8 186 media sources from written press, web press, and relevant blogs provided by Retriever’s search tool. Due to lack of space, this reference list is not included in the appendix, but will be provided on request by the author.

The first graph, “1: ((bostad or bostadsmarknad) and (asyl or invandring or migration))” attempts to reveal the connection of housing and migration by using articles with the following keywords in Swedish (housing or housing market) and (asylum or immigration or migration). The second graph “2: ((arbete or arbetsmarknad) and (invandring or asyl or migration))” uses the same technique, using the translations of the keywords (occupation or labour market) and (asylum or immigration or migration). By putting these two separate combinations of key words, I aim to show a trend supporting the statement that the public and political interest in these topics have increased during the last years. The motivation of the studied time frame (August 2010 – April 2015) is to include the possible increase of media exposure during the general elections in September 2010 and 2014. Furthermore, it becomes relevant for the media analysis to cover the period when the political parties competed in proposing policies within these political areas.

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Table 3, 4 & 5

The columns “Number of asylum-seekers” and “Granted residence permits” are obtained from the Swedish Migration Agency’s open data on migration (Migrationsverket 2015b).

The columns “Dwellings in completed construction” and the division between tenures use data gathered from Statistics Sweden (Statistiska Centralbyrån 2015a).

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Table 6
The data in Table 6 is collected from the Swedish National Board of Housing, Building and Planning’s open data, “Boverkets öppna data” (Boverket 2014) and with the help from an official from their unit “Enheten för Boende, Arkitektur och Stadsutveckling” (Boverket 2015).

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