

Unaccompanied Refugee Minors and Political Responses in Sweden: Challenges for Social Work

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Unaccompanied Refugee Minors and Political Responses in Sweden: Challenges for Social Work

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*To my beloved grandfather Nils Bernard Östman, whose solidary
values has influenced my whole life*

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Caroline Östman

Table of contents

Abstract.....	xi
----------------------	-----------

Summary in Swedish	xiii
---------------------------------	-------------

Chapter 1

Introduction.....	1
--------------------------	----------

Main objective and research questions of the study.....	6
---	---

A brief historical background on migration	8
--	---

War, violence and increasing migration	9
--	---

World War II and its aftermath	14
--------------------------------------	----

Migration and Sweden	17
----------------------------	----

Migration in a changing political climate in Europe.....	18
--	----

Fortress Europe.....	20
----------------------	----

Earlier research on unaccompanied refugee minors.....	21
---	----

Psychological perspectives.....	23
---------------------------------	----

Psychologisation, policy and social work	26
--	----

Trusting unaccompanied refugee minors and the problem of age assessments.....	32
---	----

Chapter summary and an overview of the thesis	33
---	----

Chapter 2

Researching unaccompanied refugee minors in Sweden: Methods and methodological considerations.....	37
---	-----------

Positioning the study: Epistemological considerations	38
---	----

The use of theory in qualitative research	41
---	----

Studying social context and the meanings of unaccompanied refugee minors: Adopting a qualitative design.....	43
--	----

Data collection.....	44
----------------------	----

Documentary and auditory material.....	44
--	----

Interviews	46
------------------	----

Sampling for the interviews	48
-----------------------------------	----

Some challenges with interviewing unaccompanied refugee minors and professionals	49
Introducing the participants	51
Unaccompanied refugee minors	51
Carers.....	54
Staff from family-homes	56
Legal guardians.....	56
Municipal social workers	57
Ethical considerations.....	59
Method of analysis: Qualitative content analysis.....	60

Chapter 3

Theoretical framework.....	78
Colonialism and postcolonialism	79
Globalisation, postcolonialism and social work	82
Intersectionality and migration	85
Neoliberalism, privatisation of the welfare state and social services	88
Neoliberalism and social workers' knowledge and skills	89
Sincerity, honesty and power	90
Social integration and xenophobic politics	93
Critical social work in a time of increasing migration	97

Chapter 4

Political parties' reactions to increasing immigration.....	104
Migration and us.....	105
From the mission of saving women and children to saving Sweden	108
The cost of immigration to Sweden	110
From migration to integration	112
The post-2015 debate and political changes	114
Summary.....	117

Chapter 5

Confrontation with Swedish asylum laws and the Swedish reception system	120
Sweden as the final destination.....	122
Educational opportunities.....	125
Possibilities of family reunion	128
Liberal Swedish asylum policy.....	130
Framing asylum status.....	133
Forced to leave country of origin	133
Selective male emigration.....	140
Framing childhood	143
Not being in another EU country	151
Summary.....	157

Chapter 6

Swedish reception system's possibilities and shortcomings for integration of unaccompanied refugee minors	159
Schooling opportunities, contradictions of ambitions and realities	161
The Swedish generous allowance system and clientisation of unaccompanied refugee minors.....	169
Social authorities' working routines	177
Summary.....	183

Chapter 7

Insufficient knowledge and skills in working with the unaccompanied refugee minors.....	186
Knowledge about unaccompanied refugee minors' increasing migration and diversities	188
Professional knowledge deficiencies about the unaccompanied refugee minors.....	194
The matter of cultural competency	198
Lack of working methods, guidelines and follow-ups	201
Summary.....	206

Chapter 8

Administrating segregation in the name of humanist reception and integration.....	207
A neoliberal and postcolonial world order and global migration	208
Political transformations of the Swedish liberal migration policies	211
Choosing Sweden as the final destination	213
Framing asylum status and sincerity	216
Swedish reception system and the integration of unaccompanied refugee minors	218
Social workers' insufficient knowledge in working with the unaccompanied refugee minors	222
Cultural competency	224
The socioeconomic and political context of migration	226
Migration and future challenges for social work	229
References	233

Abstract

Currently, there are 68.5 million people forcibly displaced around the world, which is the highest figure since World War II. The affected individuals have fled their homes to seek protection elsewhere, either within their own country or across national borders. Approximately 16.2 million people were newly displaced during the year 2017 as a result of conflict, persecution, generalised violence and human rights violations. Against this backdrop of increased displacement, it is worthy of note that 52 per cent of the world's refugee population is comprised of children under 18 years of age, which is the greatest number in a decade. Within this particular group, the number of unaccompanied refugee minors (URMs) seeking asylum has increased significantly and has today reached its highest level since the United Nations Higher Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) began collecting such systematic data in 2006 (UNHCR, 2018). Although statistics show that the number of URMs seeking asylum in Sweden has steadily increased since 2006, the sudden increase of this group in 2015 in particular was considerable and both caused a poisonous political debate concerning the country's immigration policy and created a major challenge for Swedish reception and integration policy. This study is focused on the case of unaccompanied minors from Afghanistan who immigrated to Sweden in 2015.

The main objective of this study is to examine how the Swedish reception system and social work institutions meet the needs and ambitions of URMs. The study seeks to answer the following research questions: how has the increase in immigration in 2015 influenced Swedish political parties' programmes and policies?; how does the municipal receiving system for unaccompanied refugee minors in Sweden function according to the experiences of minors and their carers?; what are some of the possibilities and hindrances that exist in respect of unaccompanied refugee minors' integration into Swedish society?; and how well-informed and prepared are Swedish social workers and the 'staff from family-homes' in meeting the needs and ambitions of unaccompanied refugee minors? The methodology used in this study is qualitative content analysis based on the Swedish political debate regarding migration and integration between 2014–2018, and the result of 29 interviews with 12 URMs, nine carers, three persons from 'family-homes', three municipal social workers and two legal guardians.

The theoretical framework used to analyse the data in this study is postcolonial theory and critical intersectionalism. Given the fact that Afghanistan has, during the course of its modern history, been subjected to

the colonial and imperialist politics of European countries, the recent increase of Afghan URM migration to Sweden cannot be separated from this: that is, foreign direct intervention in the home country of these refugees in the form of Western countries' postcolonial political and economic policies. When used critically, an intersectional perspective helps us to avoid unqualified generalisations, which is often interwoven in the concept of 'immigrants' in general and URM in particular.

The analysis suggests that the political debate influencing Swedish migration and integration policies almost totally ignores the role of Western countries in the war and violence created in countries such as Syria, Iraq, Libya and Afghanistan, which is one of the major reasons behind increasing migration from those countries. It also suggests that there are many shortcomings and problems in the Swedish reception system, such as social authorities', and carers' lack of adequate knowledge about migration and integration in general and in relation to the life conditions of URM and their personal histories and ambitions in particular. There is also evidence of a strong West-centrism in how reception staff work with URM. Together, these factors harm URM's future integration in society. It is argued that social work needs critical knowledge in the education of social workers, and adequate training in skills for working with transnational families and new global family formations and relations. Also important for progressive social policy and social work are special individual-adjusted education programmes for URM, and educating the teachers and carers who work with URM, in critical knowledge and skills and socio-political mobilisation against racism and xenophobia. The topics of the study are important in a time of increasing racism and right-wing populism in mainstream politics, trends which risk negatively influencing public policy and social work research, education and practices.

Keywords: Unaccompanied refugee minors, critical social work, migration, integration, postcolonialism, critical intersectionalism, neoliberalism, globalisation

Summary in Swedish

Antalet människor på flykt runt om i världen uppgår idag till drygt 68.5 miljoner, vilket är den högsta siffran sedan Andra Världskriget. De drabbade individerna har tvingats fly från sina hem för att söka skydd någon annanstans, antingen inom det egna landet eller i andra länder. Under år 2017 tvingades ungefär 16.2 miljoner människor på flykt till följd av konflikt, förföljelse, våld och brott mot de mänskliga rättigheterna. Barn under 18 år utgör 52 procent av alla världens flyktingar vilket är det största antalet under det senaste decenniet. Inom denna specifika grupp har ensamkommande flyktingbarn och ungdomar (EFBU) ökat markant och nått sin högsta nivå sedan 2006 då FN:s flyktingorgan (UNHCR) började föra statistik över detta (UNHCR, 2018). Antalet EFBU som söker asyl i Sverige har ökat gradvis sedan 2006, men kulminerade under år 2015. Denna oväntade ökning har skapat en infekterad politisk debatt kring Sveriges flyktingpolitik samtidigt som ökningen av EFBU även har skapat stora utmaningar för det svenska flyktingmottagandet och integrationspolitiken. Denna studie fokuserar på EFBU från Afghanistan som immigrerade till Sverige under år 2015.

Studiens syfte är att undersöka hur det svenska mottagningssystemet och det sociala arbetets institutioner tillgodoser ensamkommande flyktingbarns och ungdomars behov och ambitioner. Studien avser att besvara följande frågor: hur har den ökade immigrationen under år 2015 påverkat svenska politiska partiers partiprogram?; hur fungerar det kommunala mottagandet av ensamkommande flyktingbarn och ungdomar enligt EFBU och HVB-hem personal?; vilka är de ensamkommande flyktingbarnens och ungdomarnas möjligheter och hinder till integration i det svenska samhället?; hur välinformerade och förberedda är svenska socialarbetare och familjehem för att tillgodose de ensamkommande flyktingbarnens och ungdomarnas behov och ambitioner? Studien är baserad på en kvalitativ innehållsanalys av den svenska politiska debatten kring migration och integration mellan 2014–2018 samt av intervjuer med 12 EFBU, nio anställda vid HVB-hem, tre familjehemsföräldrar, tre socialsekreterare och två gode män.

Det teoretiska ramverket som använts för att analysera och tolka studiens data är postkolonial teori och kritiskt intersektionalism. Givet det faktum att Afghanistan genom den moderna historien har utsatts för europeiska länders koloniala och imperialistiska politik, kan de senaste årens ökning av EFBU från Afghanistan till Sverige inte separeras från detta. Ökade flyktingströmningar från Afghanistan är således ett resultat av Västländers direkta ingripande i landet och deras postkoloniala politik. När det

intersektionella perspektivet används på ett kritiskt sätt kan vi undvika okvalificerade generaliseringar, vilka ofta följer debatten om 'invandrare' och 'immigranter', inklusive EFBU.

Analysen av den politiska debatten rörande migrations- och integrationspolitiken visar att Västländers roll i skapandet av krig och konflikter i länder såsom Syrien, Irak, Libyen och Afghanistan, vilket är en av de största orsakerna bakom den ökade migrationen från just dessa länder, ignoreras nästan helt. Analysen av intervjuerna visar att det finns många brister i det svenska mottagandet, såsom de sociala myndigheternas och HVB-hem personalens avsaknad av adekvat kunskap om migration och integration av EFBU och deras levnadsförhållanden, individuella historier och ambitioner. Analysen visar även att det finns en stark Västcentrism i arbetet med dessa barn och ungdomar som tillsammans med ovannämnda brister utgör hinder för EFBU:s integration i samhället. Det argumenteras, i en tid av global nyliberalism i en postkolonial värld, att utbildningen av blivande socialarbetare måste vara baserad på kritiskt tänkande och kritisk kunskap. Det behövs även kompletterande fortbildningar för verksamma socialarbetare i allmänhet, och för de som arbetar direkt med EFBU i synnerhet, om nya transnationella familjebildningar och relationer. Behovet av specifikt individanpassade utbildningar för EFBU diskuteras också. Aktivt arbete mot rasism och främlingsfientlighet i en tid då rasism och högerpopulism växer, vilket riskerar att ha en negativ inverkan på socialpolitiken, på forskningen, på utbildningen och det sociala arbetes praktiker, är av central betydelse för socialt arbete.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Currently, there are 68.5 million people forcibly displaced around the world, which is the highest figure of the post-World-War-II era thus far. The affected individuals have fled their homes to seek protection elsewhere, either within their own country or across national borders. Approximately 16.2 million people were newly displaced during the year 2017, as a result of conflict, persecution, generalised violence and human rights violations. The vast majority of these, 11.8 million people, were internally displaced, while 4.4 million people sought protection outside the borders of their country, mostly in neighbouring countries. Furthermore, 1.7 million asylum claims were submitted during the same period, with the United States being the largest recipient, followed by Germany, Italy and Turkey.

Against this backdrop of increased displacement, it is worthy of note that 52 per cent of the world's refugee population is comprised of people who are under 18 years of age, which is the greatest number in a decade. Within this particular group, the number of unaccompanied refugee minors (URMs) seeking asylum has increased significantly and has today reached its highest level since the United Nations Higher Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) began collecting such systematic data in 2006 (UNHCR, 2018). UNHCR defines an URM as an individual under the age of 18, who has been separated from both parents and is not being cared for by an adult who, by law or custom, has the responsibility to do so (UNHCR, 1994:121). This is not a newly occurring phenomenon but, due to the rapid increase of new arrivals, it has become a more visible issue in the European Union (EU) (Connor, 2016; Frontex, 2010). Since there has been no common immigration policy established among the EU member states, each country has responded differently to the arrival of immigrants: with either restriction or openness (Cerna, 2016; Hall & Lichfied, 2015). A few EU countries have provided refuge for asylum seekers, while many other countries have introduced extraordinary measures in order to either stop immigration to their country or let immigrants pass through their borders in order to reach other member states (Grigonis, 2016; Zolberg et al., 2001).

Statistics demonstrate that the quantity of URMs seeking asylum in Sweden specifically began to rise significantly in 2006. Prior to 2010, the majority of URMs in Europe arrived in the United Kingdom and Norway, but since then, Sweden has been the main recipient (Swedish Migration Board, 2015; Frontex, 2010). During recent years, most such individuals have originated from Afghanistan, Somalia and Iraq. The latter group has decreased significantly since 2009, however, while inflows of minors from Morocco, Algeria and Syria have increased (Commission on the Future of

Sweden, 2012). In spite of the noted increase of URM, and despite them being recognised as a particularly vulnerable group in the EU asylum legal regime (Sundqvist et al., 2015), the needs and experiences of URM in European destination countries remains an under-researched topic (Thommessen et al., 2015). Furthermore, the effects of migration are not merely individual concerns; they are simultaneously societal, national and international, which provides opportunities for social work research to critically engage in such inquiries (Cox & Giesen, 2010; Jönsson & Kojan, 2017; Williams & Graham, 2014).

Initially, modern migration studies focused on the reasons why people emigrate, as well as the reasons for choosing their particular destination countries (e.g., Ravenstein, 1885). Scholars often refer to a combination of 'push and pull' factors when perceiving the causes of migration. Push factors are motives that drive migrants out of their countries of origin, while pull factors determine the direction of migration. Push factors include war and conflicts, poor living standards, low economic opportunities and political repression, whereas pull factors can be depicted as improved living standards, democracy, political stability and better economic opportunities (Castles & Miller, 2009; Kennan & Walker, 2009). Causes of migration vary across time and geographical location and within different socioeconomic and political contexts (Zetter, 2012). Root causes of legal and illegal migration lie in the ambiguous social, economic and political conditions of countries of origin. Other causes include rapid population growth, high unemployment, abject poverty, civil disorder and violence provoked by internal conflicts, ambiguous or oppressive political regimes and severe violations of human rights (Aronowitz, 2009). Development of new information and communication technologies, as well as the advancement of infrastructure, has become a contributing component of globalisation. Cultural capital implies that modern electronic communications assist with providing knowledge of migration routes and labour market opportunities (Castles & Miller, 2009). The migration experience varies across different countries of origin as does the context of reception. Some minors may experience a more tranquil transition than others due to ease of admission and the resources that their families possess (Gold & Nawy, 2013). Migrants' choices of location can be explained by differences in economic opportunities but also by their network, i.e. they tend to choose a country where other migrants of the same ethnicity or from the same country of origin have migrated previously (Davies, Greenwood & Li, 2001).

In the year 2000, Ayotte identified a number of factors that specifically force minors to leave their country of origin. She based the results on 218 case studies of URM who arrived in Western Europe. The following reasons were identified:

violent death of parent(s), sometimes in front of child; detention and torture of child; armed conflicts that target child civilians; genocide; forced recruitment of children into armed forces, some under 10 years of age; trafficking of children for the purposes of prostitution under brutal conditions; persecution of child's ethnic group; denial of education due to the child's ethnic identity; political activities of the child or child's family members resulting in persecution; rape and sexual assault; abuse and/or abandonment by parents; poverty and complete lack of opportunity. (Ayotte, 2000: 9)

A more recent study, by the European Migration Network, concludes that URM enter Europe due to varied but interconnected reasons, such as seeking protection, family reunification, economic motives and medical concerns (EMN, 2010). Access to labour has also been identified as a leading pull factor, while access to work, social care and welfare benefits are considered key drivers pushing families to send their children to Europe. Regarding choices of destination countries, they appear to be mainly influenced by existing communities as well as cultural networks with origin countries. The largest recipient countries are targeted because of the diasporas already living there (Frontex, 2010). Motivational triggers often seem to be based upon limited and unrealistic information, particularly in regard to living environments in the destination countries. URM have rarely made an independent decision to leave their home country; on the contrary, they often seem to be pushed or encouraged by family or community members (Mougne, 2010). However, the gender of the URM is also a factor that influences the decision of whether or not to migrate. Migrant children in transit through irregular paths of migration face a heightened risk of sexual abuse and exploitation, alongside other difficulties, as a result of their 'illegal' status (De Genova, 2002; Digidiki, & Bhabha, 2017). That is why the rate of boys among URM is much higher than girls.

This study is focused on the case of unaccompanied refugee minors from Afghanistan who immigrated to Sweden in 2015. The concept of 'asylum-seeking unaccompanied minors' is an ambivalent combination of two political

identities, i.e. asylum seekers and children (Brunnberg, Borg & Fridström 2011). This work will be using the concept as it is politically and administratively defined by the authorities in Sweden - namely, an overlapping concept of children who are asylum seekers. In this work I use the term *unaccompanied refugee minors* (and its acronym *URMs*) rather than *asylum-seeking unaccompanied minors*. In addition, it is not the entire category of the URM_s in Sweden, who are subjected of this study, but only URM_s originated from Afghanistan.

Centuries of colonialism and imperialist politics in Afghanistan are highly relevant for understanding the increasing migration of people from Afghanistan to neighbouring countries and to Europe. The history of increasing emigration from Afghanistan to neighbouring countries goes back to the 1980s, when Afghanistan was harmed by the cold war in general and by the United States' strategic cold-war policies of defeating the Soviet Union during the reign of Ronald Reagan.

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979 offered a unique opportunity to the US in this cold war. The US's interests in war in Afghanistan coincided with the rise of fundamentalist Wahhabis of Saudi Arabian rulers, who, in cooperation with Pakistan, supported the military groups of the Afghan ethnic group Pashtun in their struggle against the Soviet. The Saudis directly, and via the Pakistani conduit, funded the most radical Pashtun groups. The United States/CIA adopted the Saudi/Pakistani foreign policy as its own and funded the same extremist entities (Mahendrarajah, 2015). The US trained the Taliban in Pakistan, armed them and sent them to fight against the pro-Soviet government of Nor Muhammad Taraki. This was the starting point of a devastating civil war in the country, one which forced millions of people to flee and seek protection in neighbouring countries, i.e. Iran and Pakistan. Post-September-11 events, and the US-led military intervention in Afghanistan, made the situation even worse, and emigration from this unstable and conflictual country continued. The immigration of many Afghan URM_s to Europe and Sweden in 2015 was, then, a direct result of a longstanding and devastating war forced upon the country by the great powers and their allies.

Main objective and research questions of the study

The entry of asylum-seeking URM_s into the European Union has, for many years, constituted a challenge for the receiving countries and their migration authorities and social institutions. It is also a challenge for the individual

migrant to become an active member of the receiving societies. The reasons for this are multifaceted and must be seen against a background involving several elements: historical and contemporary, as well as local and global. The main objective of this study is to examine how the Swedish reception system and social work institutions meet the needs and ambitions of URM; it also seeks to consider in this the broader social and political contexts in which such systems and institutions operate. The study will focus on the sudden increase of the URM immigration to Sweden in 2015 and its aftermath. The following research questions will be addressed:

- How has the increase in immigration in 2015 influenced Swedish political parties' programmes and policies?
- How does the municipal receiving system for unaccompanied refugee minors in Sweden function, according to the experiences of minors and their carers?
- What are some of the possibilities and hindrances that exist in respect of unaccompanied refugee minors' integration into Swedish society?
- How well-informed and prepared are Swedish social workers and 'staff from family-homes' in meeting the needs and ambitions of unaccompanied refugee minors?

Alongside its academic context and structure, this work hopes to generate new knowledge necessary for welfare organisations, practitioners, and civil society actors engaging in social work with newcomers and URM. Practice knowledge, which means knowledge-in-action, is a central concern in social work (Schön, 1991), focusing as it does on highlighting the skills, we need to use academic knowledge effectively (Gambrill, 1997; Trevithick, 2008). It is important that the social work profession takes steps to bridge the research-practice gap, since social workers in direct practice have an ethical responsibility to make use of empirical knowledge in their work with 'clients' (Barber, 1996; Reid, 1994). This would hopefully contribute to reducing inequalities and monitoring greater social cohesion in a globalised world and societies. This work is, then, situated in the realm of critical social work, which emphasises the need for a social work practice that contributes to equality, social justice, and social change (Ferguson, Ioakimidis & Lavalette, 2018; Kamali, 2015; Kamali & Jönsson, 2018a). Improving the working skills among practitioners is a way of strengthening the identity of social work and the betterment of living conditions of unprivileged people.

One of the areas that should be of particular interest for social work and social workers is migration and the living conditions of migrants. This is an area, which has been downplayed both in research, education and practices of social work in Sweden. Many literatures on migration and social work are mainly focused on 'cultural differences' between 'Us-and-Them' and little attention has been given to critical understanding of migration and the Swedish system of reception and integration of immigrants (de los Reyes & Kamali, 2005; Eliassi, 2015, Jönsson, 2013; Kamali, 2002, 2009).

A brief historical background on migration

There is a constant flow of people moving between and within the different countries of the world. During modern times, migration has existed in both voluntary and involuntary forms. Some people are forced to escape their countries of origin due to war and persecution, while others move for economic and social reasons. In regard to the development of societies, migration has had a substantial impact, in both countries of origin and destination countries (SOU, 2011:48).

The intensity of immigration has continuously grown in traditional destination countries such as Australia, Canada and the United States. Its composition has, however, shifted ultimately - from the dominant immigration flow coming from Europe, towards immigration primarily emerging from Asia, Africa and Latin America. After sending out migrants for centuries, the main direction of migration for Europe has changed and it has now become an immigrant-receiving continent (Massey et al., 1993). For example, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Greece, Ireland and Norway were all countries of emigration until the 1980s, but have, since then, experienced a strong flow of immigration (Marino et al., 2015).

The pattern of immigration to Europe up to the 1980s can be grouped into three main categories: colonial migration, labour migration and refugee migration. These migration and settlement patterns have been chequered and they have also evolved unevenly across time and geographical locations, leading to some West-European countries having longer immigration histories than others. Presently, the categories and movements of immigration are blurred and very diverse. Southern Europe has become the new Promised Land for migrants coming from both new and old regions (Bonifazi et al., 2008). Other countries have also begun to experience a simultaneous flow of emigration, transit migration and immigration (Penninx et al., 2006).

Immigrants currently arrive in Europe in significant numbers, from all over the world. Nowadays, we can find a mixture of skilled workers and students originating from all nations, as well as refugees and asylum seekers of all ages. There are also a number of undocumented immigrants coming across national borders, which increasingly challenges the national basis of social work (Jönsson, 2014b; Vertovec, 2006). The rapid increase of diversity that has come with continuous immigration poses the challenge of *integration* for both immigrants and receiving societies. Recent global trends indicate that diversity will become even more noticeable in the coming decades. It is stated that the question for Europe is no longer *if* it should embrace migration and diversity but rather *how* to create a solid framework and dialogue with the emphasis on increased heterogeneity and learning how to live unitedly (Buonfino et al., 2007). International migration must be understood as a permanent phenomenon rather than as a temporary movement (Rystad, 1992).

War, violence and increasing migration

The contemporary world has been shaped and reshaped by wars, genocides, colonialism, slavery and imperialist oppression. An important aspect of the current world order is the increasing 'small wars' forced on some non-Western countries, which leads to destruction of such countries' national and local structures and forces many people into displacement and emigration (Kamali, 2015). These forms of war have been neglected in literature compared to major conflicts, particularly when democracies are participants (Cooper, 2009). Since the fall of the 'Soviet Bloc' and the rapid spread of neoliberal globalisation, which is going on hand in hand with 'the global war on terror', small wars have come to influence the daily life of hundreds of millions of people. Wars in countries such as Iraq, Syria and, most significantly for current purposes, Afghanistan have global consequences, such as increasing migration to Europe and terrorist actions, but these consequences harm non-Western people much more than people in Western countries (Kamali, 2015).

The characteristics of wars and conflicts, then, have altered drastically in recent years; there has been a shift from conflicts in the wealthy parts of the world, to non-Western countries with increasing economic and socio-political problems. Old colonial and interstate conflicts have been replaced with Western countries' direct and indirect intervention in the interests of regime change (Kamali, 2015). Humanitarian intervention has emerged as a quasi-legal or moral justification for waging war and conflicts. Some examples are

the United-States-led bombings of Yugoslavia and, in 2003, the invasion of Iraq by the United States and its allies. The notion of human rights as a tool to justify war contends that a particular war is not fought for state interest, but, rather, is carried out in the defence and preservation of 'humanity'. However, for those who must face and suffer from this violence, a war in the name of humanity may appear, more accurately, as terror in the name of human rights (Kochi, 2006). Although some Western countries are directly involved in the 'colonial wars', their level of direct participation and fatalities is significantly lower than those of people in the non-Western countries affected, like Iraq and Afghanistan, who are forced to endure the material and human disasters intrinsic to such conflicts (Kamali, 2015).

At the beginning of the 20th century, about 10 per cent of those killed in war were civilians and 90 per cent were soldiers. By the end of the century, the percentages were reversed (Strachan, 2006). It has been found that war kills people in more indirect ways than direct. Since 1998, nearly all mortalities have been indirect, mainly in the form of infectious diseases, malnutrition, and neonatal and pregnancy-related conditions in resource-poor conflict environments (Kamali, 2015). Wars and armed conflicts have a variety of devastating effects for the communities that experience them; these consequences may last long after the conflicts have ended. War uproots and displaces people, destroys capital and infrastructure, disrupts schooling, damages the social fabric, and creates health and famine crises (Justino, 2010; Kamali, 2015).

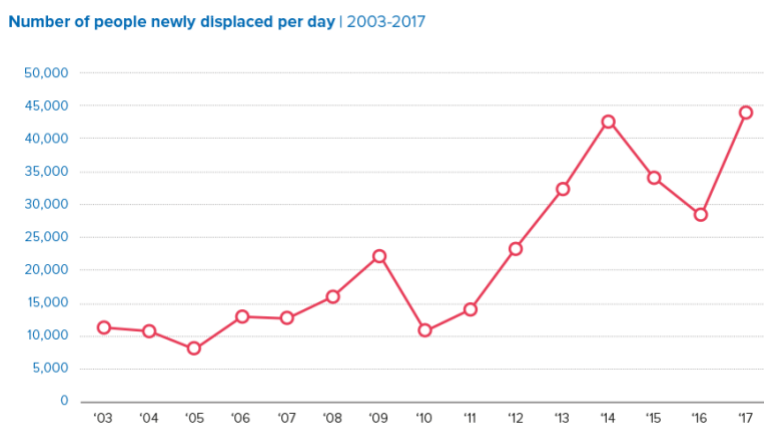
War and violence, in their various forms, play a central role in increasing rates of modern migration. Many migrant groups on the move come from countries and areas subjected to war and violence. Many of these groups, such as Syrians and Iraqis, alongside Afghans, have been forced to emigrate because of Western countries' interventions in their countries. The majority of forced migrants emigrate to neighbouring countries and a very small number of those arrive in European countries. Many of such wars are created by Western countries' violent interventions based on their socioeconomic and geopolitical interests, often presented as a matter of democratisation and of fighting dictators (Kamali, 2015). The growth of capitalism on a global scale has always been accompanied by military force, violent removal of peoples, slaughtering of different groups, and expansion (Heron, 2008).

Recent human history has witnessed two devastating world wars, which should alarm decision-makers to the human costs of wars and conflicts. Unfortunately, the uncontrolled race for interest-making and gaining huge economic advantages leads many Western countries to arms sales, which are

frequently used in 'small wars' and conflicts. The term 'small wars' are used to define the many ongoing wars, notwithstanding their size, that are killing many people around the globe.

War and violence are often considered as exceptions to the rule of modernity and the modernisation of the world. Literature since the 1990s (Joas, 2003; Kamali, 2015; Lawrence, 1997) shows, however, that war and violence have been, to the contrary, inseparable parts of modernity. Such researchers reject the historical claim of modernity as a 'peaceful' project, arguing that modernisation and its developmental locomotive follow a 'creed of absolute violence', as Lawrence (1997) puts it. War and violence have also led to the destruction of many countries' and societies' infrastructures and living conditions, which force people to leave their areas or countries of origin. Some become displaced in their own countries and others have to move to other countries. UNHCR reports (Global Trends, 2018) show that about 40 million people are forcibly displaced in the world because of wars and conflicts, and that the number of forcibly displaced people is increasing each year.

Figure 1. Number of people displaced each day (2013-2017).

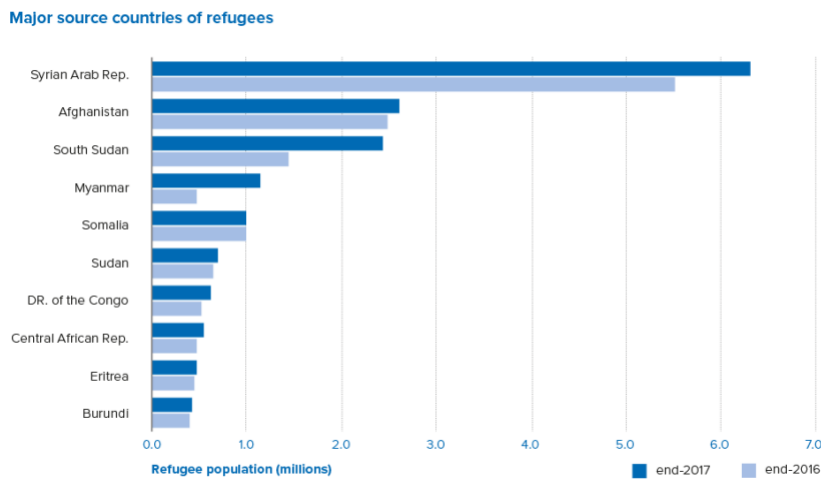


Source: Global Trends: Forced displacement in 2017 (UNHCR, 2018).

Figure 1 shows that the displacement of people has continuously increased in the world since 2003. About 10,000 people became forcibly displaced each day during 2003, and the number of forcibly displaced people has now grown, becoming more than 40,000 people each day in 2017. The same report shows

that people in such countries as Afghanistan and Syria are mostly harmed by ongoing wars and conflicts, which then leads to emigration and displacement. For example, Syria was, for many decades, a country of immigration for displaced refugees, such as Palestinians. The country has more recently turned into a warzone, forcing many Syrians to emigrate, either to neighbouring countries (such as Lebanon and Turkey) or to Europe.

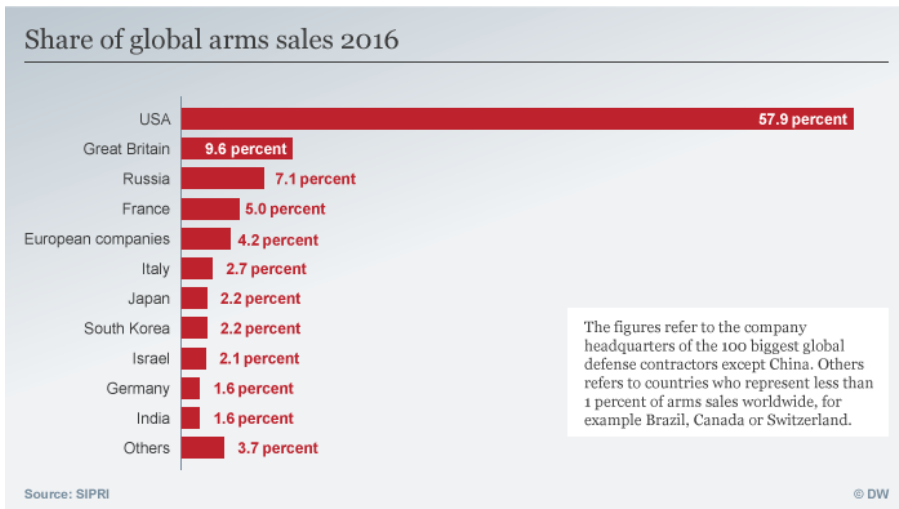
Figure 2. Major source countries of refugees.



Source: Global Trends: Forced displacement in 2017 (UNHCR, 2018).

Wars in those countries where the most asylum seekers in Sweden come from, such as Afghanistan and Syria, are caused by Western countries as part of the pursuit of their global economic and political strategic interests (Kamali, 2015). Statistics show clearly that Western countries are gaining huge income from selling weapons to those countries and groups that either are directly engaged in the wars and conflicts or are in fear of possible wars and conflicts. The Western countries and their allies stand for almost all sales of weapons in the world. Figure 2 illustrates this fact and shows that the most powerful country in the world, the US, stands for 57.9 per cent of global arms sales; and the fact that the US arms industry have many strategic cooperations with many other producers of armaments - such as German, Italian, French and Swedish producers - makes the share of the country in the global arms sales even greater than this figure.

Figure 3: Share of global arms sales 2016



Source: Weapons Sales Up Again Worldwide (SIPRI, 2017).

Nearly half of the US' arms exports goes to the Middle East (The Guardian, 12 March, 2018). Therefore, the claims of the US and other Western countries to hold only peaceful intentions in their (destructive) interventions in other countries are not trustworthy or credible (e.g., Kamali, 2015).

War and violence have longstanding consequences, even after the formal ending of any given conflict, which makes it very difficult for many migrants to return home and restart their lives in their countries and areas of origin. This is mainly due to the fact that wars and conflicts do not only harm and kill people but also destroy the infrastructures of affected countries. This is a major problem, and one which makes post-war societies, in non-Western countries, very difficult places to live in. The people cannot have a normal life equivalent to the pre-war situation (Kamali, 2015).

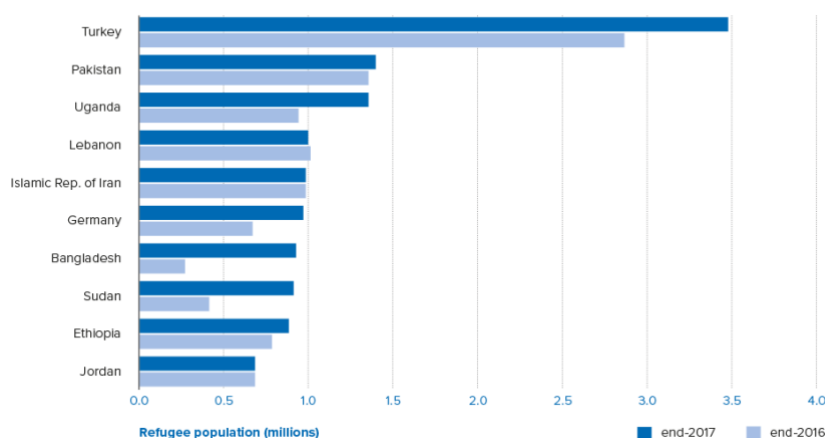
Such references to the role of Western countries in the creation of wars in non-Western countries are often lacking in the political debate surrounding immigration. Increasing local conflicts, including civil wars, do not need to be a result of the direct intervention of Western military powers (although this has happened many times); they also depend on the globalisation of neoliberal policies in the world, which has led to growing socioeconomic gaps between the richest and the poorest in the world (more of this later). The

impacts of climate change can also be added as another reason behind the creation of domestic violence and civil wars (Kamali, 2015). Ultimately, all wars and violence lead to mass migration of people subjected to such atrocities, which force them to leave their areas and countries of origin and move to more secure areas and countries.

As mentioned earlier, people who are forced to emigrate from their countries because of wars and conflicts do not primarily migrate to Europe, or other Western countries, but to those countries neighbouring their own.

Figure 4. Major host countries of refugees.

Major host countries of refugees



Source: Global Trends: Forced displacement in 2017 (UNHCR, 2018).

This may be one of the reasons why Western countries do not care much about the ongoing wars and conflicts and peoples' suffering in those countries.

World War II and its aftermath

As stated earlier, in the post-war period, international migration has increased in volume and changed its composition. Many of the large-scale migrations up to the 1990s have been primarily economic in their motivation. Between 1945 and 1973, the main economic strategy in 'highly developed' countries focused on investment and expansion of production (Castles & Miller, 2009). Following the end of World War II, continental Europe, with its economic growth, had a level of labour demand that eventually could not be satisfied

domestically. This led to a great need for foreign workers from less privileged countries and former European colonies. Most countries first sought to find workers in Southern Europe, believing these migrants could be assimilated more quickly in the labour market, and later Turkey and finally Northern Africa (Castles & Miller, 2009; Hansen, 2003). During this period, there were three main types of labour migration:

- Migration of workers from the periphery of Europe to Western Europe.
- Migration of workers from former colonised countries to the colonial powers, such as the UK, France, Belgium and the Netherlands.
- Permanent migration to Australia and Northern America.

Immediately after World War II, Western Europe began to recruit foreign workers as a solution to post-war labour shortage, particularly male workers. Such immigration was expected to be mainly temporary. The female minority was, however, always substantial and they were often preferred employees at textile and clothing factories, electrical assembly plants and food processing enterprises. The UK recruited primarily male workers from Ireland, Italy and refugee camps. They also received a significant inflow of workers from their former colonies in the Caribbean, the Indian sub-continent and Africa. France recruited workers from Spain and Portugal who had escaped dictatorship in their respective country of origin. They also received large-scale immigration from its former colonies in West Africa, such as Senegal, Mali and Mauritania. Non-European immigrants in France and the UK were relegated to the bottom of society, often working in exploitive conditions and living in segregated areas in poor conditions. The Netherlands had two main flows from former colonies, consisting of repatriates from Indonesia and, later, workers from Surinam. Further, Belgium brought in workers from Italy to work in the coal mines, as well as the steel and iron industry. Sweden, in which this study is taking place, employed workers from Finland and Southern Europe. Germany had the most advanced recruiting system. The German government set up recruitment offices in the Mediterranean area and selected workers from Italy, Greece, Portugal, Turkey, Morocco, Tunisia and Yugoslavia (Castles & Miller, 2009). The basic idea behind these work schemes was that foreign labour was seen as 'guest workers', who would remain as long as there were jobs available for them; once the economy slowed down, they would return back home (Hansen, 2003).

Initially, the majority of foreign workers in the Western European countries lived under restrictive conditions, with prohibitions on job changing, permanent settlement and family reunion. Therefore, they were solely seen as a part of the labour force and not as a part of a country's general population. In the 1960s, however, many industries became highly dependent on foreign workers. This dependence, combined with diplomatic pressure and the need to attract and retain workers due to international labour competition, resulted in relaxations on family reunion, community formation and permanent residency. These different flows of migration were both circular and permanent and resulted in new, ethnically distinct populations in advanced industrial countries (Castles & Miller, 2009). Furthermore, multinational and consensual agreements were formed, with the purpose of facilitating labour migration. Free movement for workers within the European (Economic) Community, initiated in 1968, and the Nordic Labour Market were also of importance.

The general post-World-War-II economic prosperity came to an end in the early 1970s because of economic stagnation in many Western countries. This repression caused a halt for labour migration, as many countries imposed more restrictive policies and began limiting the number of admissions. Simultaneously, a number of different conflicts took place around the world (Allwood & Franzén, 2000; Castles & Miller, 2009). These were factors that led to a change in migration composition; instead of a labour force, streams of *refugees* began to flow across the European borders. Another important factor in the shift was the reaction toward a fundamental restricting of the labour process and of the world economy. This was marked by: changes in global investment patterns; the revolution of microelectronic technology; erosion of traditional, skilled, manual occupations; and expansion in the service sector, with the demand for both high-skilled and low-skilled workers. The increased differentiation of labour forces, on the basis of gender, age and ethnicity, also played a large role. These factors still have an effect upon modern migration, and today globalisation and Europeanisation are of great importance as well (Castles & Miller, 2009).

Women have, for example, been migrating more independently since the early 1980s; women have always been present in flows of migration but traditionally as spouses, daughters and dependents of male migrants. Indeed, the past few decades have experienced a gradual shift from a family reunification trend to a more economically motivated strategy, as there has been an increase of female migrants as the main economic provider. Females currently make up over half of all migrants in more privileged areas, and

slightly half in the less privileged areas of the world. Observations show that women and men circulate differently in the global economy. Men represent the majority of skilled professionals in the information technology and scientific sectors, while women tend to cluster around the welfare and care professions. When women migrate on the basis of labour skills, the occupational categories open to them are often limited to service occupations such as domestic workers, nurses or caregivers and work within the retail/hospitality sectors. Migration of highly skilled women is relatively invisible, except within the nursing profession (Liebsch, 2010).

Migration and Sweden

Although not always officially recognised, Sweden has traditionally been a country of migration for centuries (Svanberg & Tydén, 1998). After a period of large-scale emigration of Swedes to America in the 19th century, immigration to the country increased during the 20th century. Sweden received immigrants primarily from other European countries such as Norway, Denmark, Finland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. A large number of them ended up settling permanently. Post-war Sweden had a great need for an expanded labour force; 256.000 workers were recruited from Finland, Italy, Greece, Australia and Belgium (Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2001). In contrast to many Western countries, Sweden encouraged employees to bring their families and did not apply 'guest worker' politics (Dingy-Kyrklund, 2007). During the 1970s, the major contributors to the immigrant population in Sweden were refugees from South America, Lebanon, Poland and Turkey. In the 1980s, meanwhile, the majority of refugees came from Iran, Iraq and East African countries (Bevelander, 2009). Since the mid-1990s, Sweden has also received immigrant workers from the Netherlands, the UK and Germany. This is linked to labour market expansion through membership in the EU/EEA in 1994 and in the European Union the following year. Migration increased even further when additional countries became members of the EU in 2004 and 2007 (Commission on the Future of Sweden, 2012).

Even though the immigration scene has been very diverse in Sweden since the 1980s, it has been dominated by refugee immigration and family reunification. This is connected to socioeconomic and political transitions. The fall of the 'socialist bloc' and the 1989 collapse of the Berlin Wall led to significant political changes in Germany and Central and Eastern Europe. The breakdown of East Germany had a domino effect upon other communist regimes, which enabled mass migration (Castles & Miller, 2009; Commission

on the Future of Sweden, 2012). The breakup of Yugoslavia in the 1990s consisted of a political, economic and humanitarian collapse. The wars resulted in the exodus of a substantial number of people and caused the most extensive refugee problem in Europe since World War II (Schierup, 1995). Sweden received 74.000 refugees immediately and, by 1998, the number of Yugoslavs had reached 127.554 (Westin, 2000). Wars, civil wars and conflicts in other parts of the world - such as Afghanistan, Iraq, Ethiopia and Kenya - have also contributed to the Swedish refugee composition. The movement from Afghanistan and Iraq is a direct consequence of the United States' politics, followed by the events of September 11, 2001 (Commission on the Future of Sweden, 2012). Additionally, the conflict in Syria has become one of the reasons behind increasing migration to Sweden in the 2010s. Indeed, Sweden has been one of the main recipient countries for Syrian refugees since the outbreak of the conflict. The increase in Syrian refugees' asylum applications was particularly strong during the second half of 2013, as the armed conflict in the country intensified (UNHCR, 2013). However, the major increase in the number of refugees coming to Sweden in 2015, including unaccompanied minors, was framed as a 'refugee crisis'. The concept of 'refugee crisis' is misleading since, as Pouran Djampour (2018: 278) argues, what is being framed in these terms is, rather, 'a crisis of the liberal political system, which is shaped not only by racial and colonial histories, but also by a denial of its past and thus also of the consequences it has in the present'.

Migration in a changing political climate in Europe

As was discussed earlier, the fall of the Soviet empire resulted in increasing ethnic conflicts and 'small wars', which forced many people to emigrate and seek asylum, either in neighbouring countries or in Europe and other Western countries. This has gone hand in hand with neoliberal globalisation (also previously discussed), by which many small nations have been forced to launch adjustment policies to the global neoliberal market; this has also led to increasing 'small wars' and conflicts over shrinking resources, with forced migration as one of the results (Kamali, 2015; Kamali & Jönsson, 2018a). However, such changes have not only influenced non-Western countries, but also Western countries themselves. Neoliberal policies in Western countries have forced the welfare states to retreat from their traditional support for their citizens, in a time of deepening socioeconomic gaps in society. Xenophobic groups and parties have used migration to mobilise popular support and have formed new xenophobic and racist parties - such as Front Nationale in France, Lega Nord in Italy, The Freedom Party of Austria, Sverigedemokraterna in

Sweden, Dansk Folkeparti in Denmark, Fremskrittspartiet in Norway and Sannfinländarna in Finland. Such parties have used the old colonial discourses about the 'others' in order to frame a new racist discourse about 'Us-and-Them' (de los Reyes & Kamali, 2005; Goldberg, 1993; Kamali, 2009). In this connection, the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon in the US have been significant, reinforcing the anti-immigrant sentiments that have led to increasing popular support across Europe for a xenophobic and racist approach to politics.

Such parties' growing popularity led to their increasing influence in European mainstream political life. According to Kamali (2009), xenophobic and racist parties have influenced the European political life in two different ways:

- Direct influence, by participation in local and national decision-makings.
- Indirect influence, by influencing mainstream parties' party programmes and electoral slogans.

Although, in countries such as Sweden, the direct influences of the electoral success of these racist and populist parties (or RPPs) has not been substantial, the indirect socio-political influences of such parties have been much more important. Many mainstream parties, alarmed by the electoral success of the RPPs, have adopted such parties' party programmes and anti-immigrant propaganda, which has led to a more restrictive immigration policy and the transformation of a policy of integration to become the policies of securitisation.

In the Swedish case specifically, small racist groups, such as 'Keep Sweden Swedish' (Bevara Sverige Svenskt), gradually organised themselves into a new party, Sweden Democrats (SD), with the aim of gaining electoral support and entering the Swedish parliament. They have consistently, from the very beginning, presented immigration and immigrants as *the* major problem for Swedish society and framed themselves as 'The last defender of the nation' (Lipponen, 2004). They succeeded in entering parliament in the election of 2010, having won the votes of 5.7 per cent of the electorate. Their main pledge in that election was framed in accordance with their traditional anti-immigration ideology. The slogan was 'Stop immigration or stop the pensions', which aimed at presenting immigrants as posing a threat to 'Swedes' pensions'. Ever since their entrance into parliament, the political

influence of SD has continuously increased, and today they are the third largest party in Sweden. Their electoral success and popularity have resulted in mainstream parties' adoption of a much more restrictive immigration policy and a harsher discourse on both immigration and integration (Kamali, 2009, 2015).

Having outlined the socio-political context in which migration to Europe occurs in the 2010s, focus now switches to looking at the situation of URMIs specifically and how this has been typically studied in the literature – in this, seeking to establish the necessity of exploring the experiences and lives, the needs and ambitions, of UMRs from a critical social work perspective. Immigrants coming to Europe in general, and to Sweden in particular, are facing a hostile and racist environment, which, in many cases, forces them to either return or to become undocumented.

Fortress Europe

Almost all countries and regions of the world are increasingly being affected by migratory movements. One of the consequences of increased migration is the tendency towards more stringent regulation of migration in receiving countries (Adams, Dominelli & Payne, 2009; Castles & Miller, 2009). The European Union policy framework concerning refugees and asylum has since the 1980s been described by researchers as focusing on restrictive measures and migration control. It has been implied that policy makers perceive immigration as constituting a risk instead of attempting to maximise the benefits that can follow with migration and protect those in need of a safe haven. It is also argued that the current legal instruments in use emphasise the potentially destabilising effects of migratory movements in societies in the European Union. These conflicting frameworks of common asylum policy has consequently been termed Fortress Europe which is characterised by reinforced external border surveillance, interception of boats and other means of transport, visa restrictions, limited access to protection for third country nationals, efforts to intensify the forced return of denied asylum seekers and irregular immigrants (Lazaridis, 2011). Political changes have shaped and transformed Europe, a consequence of increased migration is the tendency towards more stringent regulation of migration in receiving countries. The change of the European political sphere and the entrance of new xenophobic parties in European local and national parliaments have influenced the debate on immigration as a major electoral issue and a matter of national security (Kamali, 2009). Such changes have even influenced Sweden, a country with a

relatively liberal immigration policy. The electoral success of the xenophobic party, Sweden Democrats, in the election of 2010 pushed the debate on immigration to the fore of the political debates in the parliament.

Several provisions in European Union legislation in migration, before the sudden increase of immigration in 2015, have stressed the need to protect vulnerable groups of migrants such as URM (e.g., Lazaridis, 2011). The Dublin Regulation serves as a core system that determines which EU member state is responsible for examining asylum claims. The current Dublin III Regulation was adopted in 2014 and includes a wider definition of family to benefit URM. URM are permitted to be reunited with grandparents, uncles or aunts who reside in the member states (ILPA, 2014). Although the control and disincentive approach were to a certain extent counterbalanced by international human rights, for example the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) (Lazaridis, 2011), the situation has changed since the growing immigration in 2015 and the electoral success of racist and anti-immigrant parties in Europe. In Sweden, the electoral success of the anti-immigration party, Sweden Democrats, and the sudden increase in immigration in 2015 has led to increasing border control and other legal restrictions on immigration.

Earlier research on unaccompanied refugee minors

Large-scale movements of minors have taken place earlier in history, most of them due to war and political conflict (Stretmo, 2014). Hessle (2009) sought to thoroughly compile such movements in her thesis, revealing that there are records of URM going back over a hundred years. Approximately 1.000.000 Armenians were deported by the Ottoman Empire between 1915 and 1923. Many children had been abandoned or separated from their parents, who had either fled or been murdered; fortunately, more than 130.000 Armenian children were eventually rescued. The two most historically recognised rescue efforts of URM took place during the Nazi period and World War II. An unknown number of those considered 'non-Aryan' children were systematically deported out of Germany and the Nazi occupied countries; these rescue missions, of predominantly Jewish children, are famously known as 'Kindertransport'. The largest evacuation of children in the 20th century is the case of the 'Finnish war children', when approximately 70.000 children were evacuated from Finland and transported to Sweden (Hessle, 2009). These war children were between the ages of six-months-old and 15-years-old (Lagnebro, 1994). Some of the children remained in Sweden after the war

(many had been adopted by their foster parents), while others returned at various stages to Finland. By 1949, there were 15.000 war children in Sweden, and, out of those, approximately 1.500 stayed and settled permanently (Holm, 1968; Räsänen, 1990).

Previously in history, minors were temporarily evacuated in groups by private volunteers and aid organisations. However, over the last few decades, they have arrived individually in order to seek asylum. There is also a shift regarding their nationality, as the majority now originate from non-European countries. Hessle (2009) notes that the Swedish Migration Board began documenting the arrival of URM's in 1988. The early statistics leading up to 1995 are somewhat uncertain, but after this point, they become reliable due to a more advanced registration system. Until the mid-2000s, the annual numbers of URM's remained at a similar level, with only some variations. However, ever since, there has been a gradual increase, followed by a steep rise in 2014 and 2015 (SMB, 2015). Immense shifts in the scale and diversification of international migration produces questions about the reshaping of contemporary societies and communities, and, most pertinently for social work, questions about the adequacy and nature of responses within particular welfare systems (Williams & Graham, 2014).

Research concerning URM's is relatively new but the contemporary increasing migration of URM's to Western countries has led to growing interest among scholars, thus leading to its formation as its own area of research. The vast majority of the research has been conducted in North America, Europe and Australia. Remarkably, one of the earliest reports focusing directly on URM's was published by Social Service Review back in 1962; it addressed Cuban URM's arriving in the United States. The Cuban Revolution led many people to seek refuge in the United States for political reasons. The majority of the refugees were educated and professionally skilled men and women, but minors were also recognised as a central part of the Cuban exodus:

Many of the refugees who have entered the United States since November, 1960, are children, and a surprisingly large number have been unaccompanied by parents or guardians. In the safe environment of a normal American home, it is difficult to conceive of sending one's children alone to an alien land where language, manners, and customs are entirely strange to them. But this is the choice that thousands of Cuban parents have made and are making in the belief that the alternative - indoctrination with the malignant seeds of communist dogma - would be infinitely more detrimental to the welfare of their children. (Oettinger, 1962: 378)

An agreement on a temporary aid programme was signed between the Federal Children's Bureau and Florida's Department of Public Welfare. This made the Children's Bureau responsible for child welfare services, which included care and protection of URM. This contract was unique because, for the first time, the government funded housing (group facilities or individual foster 'family-homes') and aid (schooling, psychiatric and medical care) for refugee minors. Special work staff was also employed in order to ensure the minors' needs were met. Before the aid programme was launched, President Kennedy described URM as 'the most troubled group among the refugee population' (Conde, 2000; Oettinger, 1962; Walsh, 1971). Oettinger goes on to make an important prediction in her report when she concludes that, although it is a temporary aid programme, it will continue as long as there is a need for it and that its impact will be manifested long after its dissolution. In the late 1970s, a study on Vietnamese refugees living in camps in the United States mentions URM. Life in the refugee camps is portrayed here as spartan and stressful due to uncertainties regarding when and where they would be resettled. Many people were struck by severe anxiety not knowing what had happened to their loved ones. The researchers found that URM experienced more psychological problems than those in intact families or with relatives accompanying them (Harding & Looney, 1977).

In contrast to critical social work perspective, research and the debate concerning the living conditions of URM are mainly focused on their psychological perspective. This is mainly due to the fact that such research and debates ignore the role of global neoliberal policies behind forced migration and the role of majority societies' West-centrism and racism for immigrants' social problems (Kamali & Jönsson, 2018a). However, given the importance of such debates, some psychological perspectives are presented here.

Psychological perspectives

Research concerning URM that was conducted during the 1980s and 1990s mainly focused on the protection needs and mental health care of this group (Boothby, 1992; Eisenbruch, 1988; Felsman et al., 1990; Fox et al., 1994; Hjern et al., 1991; Kinzie et al., 1988; Kinzie et al., 1986; Mollica et al., 1997; Ressler et al., 1988; Sack et al., 1994). Studies about mental health problems among URM is still the dominating area of study in this particular research field. For example, Felsman et al. (1990) compared and assessed psychological distress among three subgroups of Vietnamese refugees encamped in the Philippines: young adults, adolescents and URM. Their results indicated relatively high

levels of anxiety across all three groups but young adults and URM were especially overrepresented in the clinical range on measures of psychological distress. Similar findings are presented in a more recent, Danish, study where URM were found to experience a higher incidence of psychiatric and neurotic disorders compared to accompanied minors (Norredam et al., 2016). A Belgian study comparing emotional and behavioural problems between migrant youths showed that URM are five times more likely to develop severe symptoms of anxiety, depression and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) than accompanied minors (Derluyn, Broekaert & Schuyten, 2008). Other comparison studies between unaccompanied and accompanied minors have also indicated that URM exhibit greater levels of distress (Bean et al., 2007; Hodes et al., 2008; Hollins et al., 2007).

Meanwhile, McKelvey and Webb (1995) have argued that those who end up as an unaccompanied migrant may already be at higher risk of psychological distress *before* their migration begins. Although the reasons for migrating unaccompanied by adults are multifaceted - some lack opportunity, some are sent ahead to prepare the way for the rest of their family, while others are orphans or become separated from their family during migration - the unaccompanied status suggests a greater degree of pre-departure social isolation and potential vulnerability for psychological distress. A study comprised of 46 URM arriving in Finland to seek asylum revealed that 83 per cent reported having experienced persecution before their flight. Most of them also exhibited symptoms of anxiety, depression and PTSD disorder. The majority reported somatic complaints (such as abdominal pain, headache and insomnia), uncertainty regarding their future, and some even expressed suicidal thoughts. Those younger than 15 years of age were found to be particularly vulnerable, with them presenting significantly more severe behavioural problems - presumably due to older minors possessing more internal resources to cope with losses, separations and threats (Sourander, 1998). However, a decade later, a Dutch study with 582 participants discovered that older minors are instead more at risk of developing PTSD. This, it was argued, is because they have been exposed to negative life events to a greater extent (Bean et al., 2007). In addition, a British study found that increasing age was related to increased levels of post-traumatic stress symptoms.

The researchers propose that older minors phase a transition towards more independent living and higher degree of personal responsibility (Hodes et al., 2008). For some minors, this transition may be intertwined with challenges, such as uncertainty regarding asylum status, negotiations with

immigration authorities, obstacles to employment, inadequate housing, frequent moves, financial hardship, language difficulties, racial discrimination and social isolation (Ehnholt & Yule, 2006; Ellis et al., 2008; Geltman et al., 2005). McKelvey and Webb (1995) and Sourander (1998) also concluded in their respective studies that the length, or rather the delay, of asylum application processing is a significant stressor. This has also been confirmed by other researchers; for instance, Hodes (2000) found that lengthy delays are associated with fear of detention and deportation. Unresolved asylum status can, in turn, be related to higher post-traumatic stress and depressive symptoms in refugee minors (Heptinstall et al., 2004). There are a number of literature reviews regarding research that takes a psychological and mental health perspective (e.g., El Baba & Colucci, 2018; Ehnholt & Yule, 2006; Fazel, 2005; Heumer, 2009; Lustig et al., 2004; Shaw, 2003; Thomas et al., 2002; Wernesjö, 2012). The aim of such studies is to better understand vulnerability in order to develop policy and improve mental health practices (Hedlund, 2016).

Not a lot of longitudinal data exists regarding URM and their experiences in receiving countries, and the few 'follow-up' studies that have sought to speak with previously researched individuals are mostly focused on mental health. Most studies are conducted approximately up to one to four years after arrival (Almqvist et al., 1997; Becker et al., 1999; Bean et al., 2007; Hjern & Angel, 2000; Jensen et al., 2014; Krupinski et al., 1996; Rousseau et al., 2003; Seglem et al., 2011). A small number of studies have longer follow-up periods, ranging from seven to twelve years after arrival (Eide, 2000; Hessle, 2009; Montgomery, 2010; Sack et al., 1999). As a result, there is limited knowledge of the mental health statuses and life situations of URM at specific points in time and over periods in their resettlement patterns in European destination countries (Vervliet et al., 2014). However, a two-year follow-up study of URM in Norway showed that symptoms of PTSD, anxiety, depression and externalising problems were on average unchanged from an earlier assessment that was conducted six months after arrival (Jensen et al., 2014). Findings from another Norwegian study, meanwhile, highlight – by way of contrast – the importance of current life conditions for URM's mental health (Keles et al., 2016).

Wernesjö (2014) argues that there is an insufficient attention paid to situations where URM do *not* develop emotional problems. Jensen, Skårdalsmo and Fjermestad (2014) point towards the significance of conducting studies regarding the predictors of changes in mental health. Importantly, despite many adversities, young refugees are extremely resilient

and resourceful (Ehnholt & Yule, 2006). A single case study conducted by Carlson, Cacciatore and Klimek (2012) used risk and resilience models to explore URM's relationship both to potential risks and to protective factors. The study notes that important factors contributing to resilience include a positive attitude, healthy coping mechanisms and religiosity or the belief in a higher power, as they can be used as sources of comfort and encouragement. Other important protective factors are a sense of connectedness to a society's reception and education systems. Education plays one of the most important roles in the introduction of refugee youths and children into the new society (Niemeyer 2015; Oppedal & Idsøe 2015; Taylor & Kaur Sidhu 2012; Wilkinson 2002). The flexibility of the educational system has an important impact on the pathways and later success of young people, especially those who are immigrants or refugees (Crul & Vermeulen 2003; Derwing et al., 1999; Watt & Rosseingh, 1994; Wilkinson, 2002). Education plays a crucial role in a URM's understanding of their place in the new society and the development of a sense of belonging there (Bitzi & Landolt, 2017). However, there is a widening social gap concerning education between ethnic Swedes and migrant minorities (Bunar, 2016). In this context, problems such as inadequate support structures, lack of space caused by the sudden arrival of large numbers of refugee students, uneven allocation of new arrivals among municipalities and schools, and physical segregation and social exclusion all play their role (e.g., Bunar, 2015; Nilsson, 2017). A stable, supportive and caring home life is also a key factor. Findings from a Dutch study indicate that minors living in foster care demonstrate less post-traumatic stress symptoms than those who reside in semi-independent living arrangements (Montgomery & Dobrowolski, 2012). Hodes et al. (2008) suggest that research needs to examine protective factors among minors who show resilience. If studies continue to solely focus on emotional problems, trauma and psychiatric diagnosis, researchers risk constructing URMs as simply being passive and vulnerable instead of capturing a more nuanced picture, in which they are able and capable despite, sometimes, being vulnerable.

Psychologisation, policy and social work

There is a substantial interest in researching and debating the matters of migration and integration of immigrants in general and migrant children in particular from a psychological perspective. This is partly due to the 'triumph of the therapeutic' in 'Western culture', which according to Philip Rieff (1987) is a path chosen since the heyday of Sigmund Freud's psychoanalysis in early 20th century. In such a path, psychologisation of individuals' and groups'

social problems downplays or ignores the role of social institutions and structural properties, which form the context of individuals' social actions (De Vos, 2012; Madsen, 2014). This has led to a kind of neoliberal governmentalisation, in Foucault's term, through which the entire existence of individuals is reduced to their personal abilities (e.g., Kamali & Jönsson, 2018a). In other words, individuals are forced into the obligation of self-governance (Barry, Rose & Osborne, 1996). This 'triumph of the therapeutic' is often related to the US and not Northern countries, such as Sweden with a strong social democratic tradition. This is however more of an illusion than a reality. The Nordic countries have during the last three decades gone through a process of neoliberalisation which has changed what is known as 'the Scandinavian model' (Kamali & Jönsson, 2018a). The 'triumph of the therapeutic' has also become an American cultural export item, which has influenced the rest of the world, including the Nordic countries (Madsen, 2014).

Besides, the fact that the majority of psychosocial effect studies are of quantitative nature, based upon clinical interviews and self-report questionnaires and using various measuring tools for screening (Bean et al., 2007; Bronstein et al., 2013; Felsman et al., 1990; Jensen et al., 2014; Keles et al., 2016; Keles et al., 2018; Oppedal & Idsøe, 2012; Stotz et al., 2015) adds to the problems of denying institutional and structural context of migration. Criticisms of the reductionism of quantitative analyses point to an inadequacy in capturing the meanings of individual research participants, especially those whose life circumstances put them at the edge of normative experience (Lawrence et al., 2016). URM's tend to be located beyond the realms of a normal, or rather an ideal, upbringing (Wernesjö, 2012). Hopkins and Hill (2008) bring attention to the importance of providing a detailed depiction of the multiplicity of life circumstances and experiences in order to develop and improve existing health and social services to identify and meet needs. Majumder et al. (2015) state that explanatory models of mental illness have a very strong cultural basis and cannot be reduced to purely individual basis. As stated above, although support like 'talking therapies' have a well-established framework within a Westernised healthcare system, it is used as a way to legitimise the retreat of the state from its traditional duties towards the welfare of the people living within its borders.

In psychological studies about the health care of URM's in Western countries, such as Majumder et al. (2015), they discovered that many held negative attitudes towards mental health and had a lack of trust in such services, which according to the authors could be linked to previous

experiences of psychiatric care in their countries of origin. This is similar to findings in another qualitative study, in which the issue of mistrust among African URMs in the Republic of Ireland was explored:

It seemed that many of them had grown up in a climate of mistrust where people treated each other with suspicion. As such, mistrust was somewhat of a norm, embedded within the participants' previous social settings. This climate often existed as a result of conflict, ethnic or religious tension, or totalitarian government regimes. In essence, within their socialization process the young people had learnt to mistrust people and had become accustomed to it as an aspect of their daily lives (Ní Raghallaigh, 2014: 90).

Against this backdrop of 'learnt mistrust', a significant number of the participants also expressed the feeling of being mistrusted *by others*, in the context of relaying experiences of racism; many spoke about the (Irish) public not wanting asylum seekers in their country. In terms of their own feelings of mistrust towards the host society, meanwhile, concerns about truth-telling and not knowing people well emerged here as substantial factors. For some minors, lying occurred due to lack of trust. They felt unable to share their true motives for leaving their countries of origin because of their mistrust of institutions, professionals and even friends. They feared consequences such as deportation for telling the truth. In relation to this, they had difficulties with developing trusting relationships with their surroundings (Ní Raghallaigh, 2014). Identifying professionals as representatives of the state is not uncommon (Ellis et al., 2011) therefore, particular issues, such as mental health, can be perceived as intertwined with legal issues, despite the differences being explained to URMs (Majumder et al., 2015). In this vein, Kohli (2006) also notes the importance of establishing trustful relationships; he found that URMs became cautious, and even silent, about their origins and backgrounds when talking to authority figures, such as social workers. Findings from a Swedish study, meanwhile, indicate that bureaucracy creates barriers in URMs' relationships with their social workers, with the interviewed URMs expressing uncertainty about what the social workers were using their documentation for (Herz & Lalander, 2018).

Issues of everyday and structural racism in relation to URMs (some of which, as we have seen above, are evoked in Ní Raghallaigh's study) are specifically addressed by Harman and Sinha (2014). They argue that asylum-seeking URMs experience inequalities and notions of 'otherness' because of their migration status in relation to immigration, education and social care

services. In a follow-up study, a number of former URM discuss feelings of subordination and dislocation. They have often felt disregarded and silenced by social workers, the 'staff from family-homes', teachers and even interpreters (Gustafsson et al., 2012). Racial prejudice regarding asylum seekers circulate in society, which connect with perceptions about undeserving welfare profiteers, crime, threats to 'our jobs' and terrorism. Further, experiences of structural racism are shaped by a legally enforced system of exclusion, which seeks to limit entry into and internal mobility within the nation, as well as access to education, employment, health and other spaces. A Canadian study, supported by a theoretical framework on risk identity, suggests that URM are constructed through anti-refugee and anti-youth discourses. Consequently, they are at risk of being constructed as delinquents and threats. Moreover, such constructions may legitimise discriminatory attitudes and practices, as well as effectively justify a host country's decision to ignore their obligations to this population of minors (Bryan & Denov, 2011).

Some researchers have focused on examining the root causes for URM migration (e.g., Ayotte, 2000; Boland, 2010; Hopkins & Hill, 2008; UNHCR, 2010; Vervliet et al., 2014). The general consensus is that their motives for leaving are multifaceted. URM enter Europe due to varied but interconnected reasons, such as seeking protection, family reunification, economic motives, medical concerns (EMN, 2010), political pressure, ethnic or religious conflicts, and war (Atasü Topcuoglu, 2012). Access to labour has also been identified as a leading pull factor, while access to work, social care and welfare benefits are considered key drivers that push families into sending their children to Europe. The southwestern border in the United States has, over the past few years, seen a significant increase of URM from Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador. Many of them flee because of violence, starvation, impoverished living conditions and to escape recruitment from cartels and criminal gangs (Sawyer & Márquez, 2016). Several URM from Central America seeking refuge in the United States are survivors of domestic violence, whose governments are unable or unwilling to protect them from familial assault, rape and torture (Marzouk, 2016). A study conducted in South Africa explores the experiences of Zimbabwean URM; their reasons for leaving were poverty, abuse, political unrest, lack of job and educational opportunities, and the fear of contracting HIV and AIDS (Magqibelo et al., 2016). It can be argued, however, as some researchers do, that little is currently known about URM's specific modalities in forced migration (Boland, 2010; Hopkins & Hill, 2008; Thomas et al., 2004; Verliet et

al., 2014). Furthermore, the majority of research that does exist is conducted within individual-oriented disciplines that focus on psychopathology and personal developmental perspectives (Brunnberg et al., 2011; Wernesjö, 2012). In contrast, the aforementioned researchers put emphasis on the need for further research in a social work context.

The psychological research tradition has also influenced research on URM migration and living conditions in Sweden. Studies conducted by Hessle (2009), which was a 10-year follow-up study, and Wallin and Ahlström (2005), showed that most of the participants had worked through their initial psychological issues and had begun adapting to their new country, while some still felt lonely and excluded by the community. In conclusion, the researchers suggested that healthcare and social welfare professionals should always be sensitive to symptoms of PTSD when working with refugees, even though several years have passed since they had first entered the country (Wallin & Ahlström, 2005). Others have studied the role of the Swedish asylum and reception system for URM perception of Sweden and their mental health.

One of such studies is Thommessen, Corcoran and Todd (2015), who interviewed six male refugees from Afghanistan with the experience of arriving unaccompanied in Sweden. The study presents individual experiences of arriving and adjusting to a host country; further, it demonstrates the challenges and difficulties and the support systems perceived to be most helpful. The author also calls for further research drawing upon minors' own voices. A recent study conducted by Herz and Lalander (2017) showed that the URM emigration journey and its outcome is related to their agency as they struggle for survival and that the current political and social context in Europe is essential in their escape, migration route and future plans. De Graeve, Vervliet and Derluyn (2017) state that research investigating the broader social context of how URM experience their emigration and resettlement can contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the positions and well-being of URM, as well as the discourses and practices that unfold around them. Wimelius et al. (2017) found that the Swedish reception system lacks both interconnections between actors and an articulated political vision of integration. There is also a need for systematic evaluations and long-term follow-ups of how reception affects integration. Wernesjö (2012) suggests that future research on unaccompanied asylum-seeking minors should include an intersectional perspective. According to several researchers, there is also a great need for longitudinal studies with focus on later phases of life experience in the destination country,

from a social work perspective (Fazel et al., 2012; Hodes et al., 2008; Lustig et al., 2004; Seglem et al., 2011; Wernesjö, 2014).

Lidén and Nyhlén (2016) have identified patterns and motives that govern Swedish municipalities' policy on the reception of URM. Their quantitative part of the study indicates that a local negative stance on immigration - primarily expressed as support for the aforementioned anti-immigration party, the Sweden Democrats - appears to influence municipality policy on the matter. In addition, the results from the qualitative part of the study emphasise that, although economic aspects are omnipresent and hard to neglect, decision makers do stress the real and long-term benefits of reception. Lundberg & Dahlqvist (2016), meanwhile, interviewed 26 URM from Afghanistan and Iraq about their living conditions in Sweden. They found that the individual's perception of their living conditions is greatly related to the status of the asylum application: whether it has been rejected or they have been granted a residence permit. Delay during, and the unpredictability of, the asylum application process is associated with adversity, and its outcome highly influences individuals' views on the future. The researchers suggest that URM are in definite need of support and information about what happens in the asylum process. Furthermore, they conclude that the Swedish reception system is characterised by the idea of mercy and not founded on a rights-based perspective. An additional finding of their study was that attending school is of significance to the minors (both when it works and when it does not work so well), being related by URM to notions of building a future, and also helping in creating a structure for everyday life.

Montgomery, Rousseau and Shermarke (2001) emphasise the importance of considering URM as agents in their own histories, and not just as victims or passive objects in an unjust world. In this vein, the participating URM in a study by Lalander and Raoof (2016) experienced difficulty in developing a social environment in which they truly feel recognised by the residential home staff as complete human beings with valuable competences. One problem in the interaction between URM and the Swedish reception system is the problem of the mutual trust between URM and the Swedish migration authorities. Growing restrictions on migration do not leave many options for an individual to being accepted as refugee in Sweden. Being a child without accompanied biological carers is still one of the major reasons, which increases the chances of receiving residence permit in the country. This make age assessments of URM one of the major issues in the process of examining their asylum applications.

Trusting unaccompanied refugee minors and the problem of age assessments

Bhabha (2014) highlights how policymakers in destination countries perceive minor migrants as a link to potential future social problems. Meanwhile, Stretmo (2014) stresses that the construction of URM as potentially strategic migrants legitimises restrictive policy measures. In her study, she analysed how URM are constructed and governed as a specific group of refugees in Sweden and Norway. She concluded that URM are discursively positioned as ambivalent; sometimes they are singled out as vulnerable children or child victims, but concurrently also as possible strategic migrants in the sense of adults trying to masquerade as children. There is a connection between migration policy and the principle of 'the best interest of the child' (Derluyn & Broekaert, 2008; Hek et al., 2012; Lundberg, 2013). This principle can be used in order to legitimise rejections of asylum applications, by stating that the rejection does not coincide with the best interests of the minor (Stretmo, 2014). Hedlund (2016) studied legislators' perceptions of URM in the development of migration law, and how case officers transform the policy in arguments for and against residency in asylum cases. He found that chronological age becomes a key factor for how legislators understand the life situation, needs and best interests of URM. Thus, URM face the risk of being exploited due to their age and legal status (Çelikaksoy & Wadensjö, 2016).

Research regarding care has identified some important issues concerning referral and assessment as well as age assessment specifically. In the United Kingdom, Wade, Mitchell and Baylis (2005) found that the initial assessment among URM differs in quality. When gathering information, an 'exchange approach', where the worker respects the individuals' expertise, is generally preferred. The contrary 'procedural approach', where the worker follows a clear strict format, is not regarded as satisfactory. Care provided to URM in Europe has, in the last decade, been compromised by the issue of age; and, subsequently, there is currently a growing interest regarding age assessment (e.g., Busler, 2016; Cameriere et al., 2014; De Luca et al., 2014; De Sanctis et al., 2016; Focardi et al., 2014; Galić et al., 2016; Hjern et al., 2012; Kenny & Loughry, 2018; Nuzzolese, 2011; Rudolf et al., 2015; Schmeling et al., 2016; Tisè et al., 2011). Age estimation is primarily used to assist immigration authorities in deciding if an individual is under 18 years of age, and therefore eligible for special protection in accordance with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. One main concern is the lack of a standardised approach between the EU member states. Further, studies tend to focus on different methods and their (in)accuracy, as well as the ethical dilemmas they can cause.

Professionals working with age assessment hold a huge responsibility as they make life-altering decisions. There is an international agreement that physical and medical age assessment measures are not reliable or sufficient, alongside ethical concerns that the radiological tests typically involved may be harmful. Some EU member states also include other techniques when verifying minor status, such as interviews and psychological and sociological assessments. The whole process of determining one's age is often experienced as intrusive by URM (Abbing, 2011; De Sanctis et al., 2016; EMN, 2010; Focardi et al., 2014; Gower, 2011; Kenny & Loughry, 2018; Michie, 2005; Pradella et al., 2017; Schmeling et al., 2006; Thevissen et al., 2012).

One important matter concerning URM's integration in host countries, which is related to the age of the URM, is their level of education. Many URM participating in this research are coming from lives in countries such as Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan, where they may not have access to education. The war in Afghanistan (as well as the reign of the Taliban regime) and the uncertain migration status in Iran and Pakistan have hindered many URM from having access to education in general and to secular education in particular. For instance, Burde (2014) and Sadry (2018) show the significant role of 'mosque schools' and religious education in Afghanistan, as a society where girls are subjected to gender-specific religious and traditional hindrances that, in turn, exclude them from education more so than boys. Recently there has been a debate on the problems of URM 'real age' and their level of education, which creates problems for putting them in suitable school classes.

Chapter summary and an overview of the thesis

Studies of URM have primarily focused on emotional problems, trauma and psychiatric diagnosis, such as anxiety, depression and PTSD. This is due to the general agreement in traditional research that URM are a particularly vulnerable group of asylum seekers, with experiences of separation, disruption and multiple losses. Consequently, they are constructed as a category in need of support and protection. The emphasis lies on background experiences from their countries of origin and from their migration, and only some attention is given to their situation and life experiences in the new destination country. Such research tends to revolve very much around pathological perspectives concerning the psychological well-being of URM. Less attention has been given to the role of socioeconomic and political

processes, as well as those of neoliberal globalisation, in increasing immigration in general and increasing immigration of URM in particular.

Although, in the last few years, research has moved further towards including social aspects of URM migration and integration, there are still gaps, inherited from earlier research, concerning the problems associated with the increasing immigration of URM - including the role of welfare organisations and social work in relation to the reception and integration of this group in host societies, including in Swedish society. There is, therefore, a need for more research regarding the social effects of migration in the field of social work. We have to include new perspectives, such as those highlighting the conditions that are created by a global neoliberalisation of the world - a process influencing both those non-Western countries where asylum seekers, immigrants and URM come from, and Western countries alike. The knowledge of the global and national consequences of neoliberalism is necessary for understanding and studying the recent increase in migration of URM, their living conditions, and their future lives in Sweden.

The results from this study will strive to gain new insights into the migration process and the chances of URM integrating successfully. The aim is also to uncover tangible findings that service providers can make use of. While much research has focused on describing, explaining, and responding to the problems and pathologies of URM, relatively few studies have sought to produce knowledge about URM lives and experiences - including that in which their agency is highlighted - in order to guide both scholarship and practice from a critical social work perspective. This dissertation could be helpful in aiming to fill part of this gap.

This work consists of eight Chapters, including an introduction to the field of research, method and methodological considerations, the theoretical framework, results and analysis of the study and finally, a concluding chapter. Chapter 1, *Introduction*, discusses the general topic and provides some background to the field of research concerning migration and integration of URM. It provides a review of the literature related to URM, such as their migration process and living conditions. The chapter presents the current situation of social work in a global and political context by focusing on the reasons behind forced migration, such as war, violence and ethnic conflicts, and identifies the research gap in social work research in Sweden and argues for the importance of the study for practices of social work. The study's main objective and research questions are also presented in this chapter.

Chapter 2, *Researching unaccompanied refugee minors in Sweden: Method and*

methodological considerations, explores epistemological and ethical considerations, a presentation of the qualitative design of the study, including data collection and a data analysis section. The chapter presents and discusses the choice of the research design, method, sampling and the procedure of collecting data. A figure which illustrates the structure of the data analysis, including choice of themes, categories, coding and referencing is presented in this chapter. Chapter 3, *Theoretical framework*, presents and discusses the theoretical and conceptual framework of the study. The consequences of globalisation and a postcolonial world order, neoliberal reorganisation of the welfare state and its consequences for social services are explored. It presents a critical intersectional perspective which is argued to help analysing and understanding the processes of migration of the URM, the Swedish reception system, and social work practices with URM in a postcolonial and neoliberal welfare context.

Chapter 4, *Political parties' reactions to increasing immigration*, critically explores and analyses the political debate and discourses about migration and integration of immigrants since the sudden increase of immigration to Sweden in 2015. The material analysed in this chapter includes political articles and broadcasts concerning migration, which since the parliamentary election of 2014 were published in four major dailies and discussed in several radio and TV programs. The chapter explore how the question of migration was exploited by a racist party, Sweden Democrats (SD), and a couple of mainstream parties in their electoral campaigns. The chapter shows how such political debates for policy and legal changes influenced Sweden's immigration and integration policies. Chapter 5, *Confrontation with Swedish asylum laws and the Swedish reception system*, presents the interviewed URM's own migration histories about their 'migration journey' and the choice of their 'final destination country', i.e. The role of Sweden's liberal asylum policy and opportunities based on the principle of the 'protection of children' and individualisation and culturalisation of social problems is explored.

In Chapter 6, *Swedish reception system's possibilities and shortcomings for integration of unaccompanied refugee minors*, the author explores how the process of reception of the URM risk 'clientising' and pacifying the URM and hindering their future integration in the country. Based on interviews with municipal social workers, carers at 'residential homes', the 'staff of 'family-homes' and the URM, the author discusses and argues that although huge resources provided by the Swedish welfare system it generates many problems for the future integration of the URM. Chapter 7, *Insufficient knowledge and skills in working with the unaccompanied refugee minors*, critically

explores challenging dilemmas involved in social workers', carers' and the 'staff from family-homes' daily work with URM, which can influence the URM's future life and integration in Sweden. The lack of social authorities' adequate knowledge about market actors' lack of professionalism, proper education and insufficient methods in working with the URM are discussed. The chapter analyses how an established neoliberal 'refugee market', due to the lack of adequate knowledge among social authorities commodify the URM and put their future integration at risk. The chapter argues for the necessity of new working methods, guidelines and follow-ups.

Chapter 8, *Administering segregation in the name of humanist reception and integration*, builds on the results of the study and shows how the political transformations of the Swedish parties and the electoral success of the racist party, Sweden Democrats, have influenced Swedish migration and integration policy in general and working with the URM in particular. The relevance of the results of this study for social work practice with URM is discussed and at the end of this chapter, some suggestions for working with the URM and promoting social justice, social cohesion and a better world for everyone irrespective of individuals' place of birth, nationality, class, ethnicity, gender, age and other categorisations which generate inequalities and discrimination are presented.

Chapter 2

Researching unaccompanied refugee minors in Sweden: Methods and methodological considerations

This chapter will explore and present the research methods of the dissertation, alongside the methodological considerations that have guided the collection of data and its analysis. Explicitly refer here to the research focus (of conducting qualitative research into the experiences of URM, from a critical social work perspective) and frame in these terms. The chapter begins with a discussion on how knowledge is acquired and what knowledge represents. The discussion continues by describing the design of the study, as well as the process of collecting empirical material for the subsequent analysis. I provide a description of the different participant groups, before moving on to discussing ethical considerations. The last part of this chapter discusses qualitative content analysis as a technique to analyse data, ways to achieve trustworthiness, and the use of theory in qualitative research.

Positioning the study: Epistemological considerations

The term 'epistemology' is derived from the ancient Greek word *epistēmē*, which means science or knowledge. In simple terms, epistemology can be described as the philosophy of knowledge or how we come to know reality (Trochim, 2000). It attempts to provide answers to the questions 'how can we know?' and 'what can we know?' This involves thinking about the nature of knowledge itself, its scope and also the credibility of claims to knowledge. My approach to knowledge production – or my epistemological position – in respect of my research into unaccompanied refugee minors is guided by social constructivism. Constructivist epistemology rejects the idea that there is purely one knowable truth; in contrast, it believes that knowledge is a process of actively interpreting and constructing individual knowledge representations (Jonassen, 1991). Thus, reality is believed to be constructed through human activity, whereby people seek understanding through their interactions with each other and with the world in which they live. They deploy subjective meanings to describe and make sense of their experiences – meanings directed towards certain objects and 'things' in the world. Because such meanings are varied and multiple, the researcher using a social constructivist epistemology must look to capture this complexity, with the intention being to rely on research participants' views of the phenomena being studied. In other words, individuals' subjective meanings are both personally and socially formed, emerging through interactions with others and through historical and cultural norms. The constructivist researcher is therefore inclined to seek understanding of social context or setting (Creswell, 2014). In spite of numerous incarnations and practices related to constructivist methodology, all constructivists shared the same fundamental assumptions:

that knowledge is based on theory, that separation of researcher and subject is not possible, that separation between theory and practice is equally unattainable, and that absolute objectivity is an impossibility (Mir & Watson, 2000).

Epistemic reflexivity, a phrase coined by Pierre Bourdieu, offers a useful way of thinking critically about knowledge production. It underpins critical reflection upon the social conditions under which disciplinary knowledge comes into being and gains credibility (Whiteford & Hocking, 2012). Ongoing reflexivity on the part of the researcher means that one must look critically at what is assumed in one's chosen approach (Ryan, 2006). According to Bourdieu, conducting research involves adopting a critical stance, in the form of a sociology of 'uncovering', where one is constantly being reflexive about one's own position. He argues that his conception of epistemic reflexivity provides the means of developing richer descriptions of the social world and the basis for a more practically adequate and epistemologically reliable social science (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). Moreover, he stresses that reality is a social concept; to exist is to exist socially and what is real is relational (i.e. co-constructed with those around us). Bourdieu uses the concept of 'field' referring to settings in which humans and their social positions are located. These fields are multiple in number and they interact with one another, each field having its own structure of power relations. If researchers are both reflective and aware of their own positions, they possess the potential to observe social fields with relative objectivity. Each researcher has their individual habitus (position in social structure), which will influence the determination of theories and methodologies in the course of inquiry (Bourdieu, 1984).

Harding (1995) also sheds light on the importance of epistemic reflexivity. She calls for reflexivity about the practices of science, from the perspective of those whose voices and interests are marginalised and excluded in the production of scientific knowledge (she does so from a feminist social justice perspective). Furthermore, reflexivity is not an activity that occurs at a given point in time, but instead represents a process that unfolds throughout the entire research process (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004). Such reflexivity is not solely a personal, affective process. It is also a cognitive process that challenges us to examine the personal, social and political contexts from which theory, research and practice derive, and to understand our relationship to them (Snook et al., 2012). Inherent in this reflexivity is the attention to the ways in which research and research participants are socially situated with wider global and historical power relations.

The demand for the 'objectivity of science' has been critically examined by many critical perspectives, such as those offered by postcolonialist and feminist theory. The belief that science allows us to neutralise any outside influences on the research process, keeping it objective and free from 'contaminating' influences, is not what science has actually done historically. Colonial and racist discourses have affected nearly every aspect of how researchers conduct their research, from the choice of research questions to the interpretation of their data (Hunter, 2002). Therefore, it is important that a researcher, such as I, who does not 'belong' to the particular category of 'others' being researched (URMs), be aware of my own role, prejudices and racialisation biases, which can influence the entire processes of research. I am aware of seeing the world from my own perspective - or of what Mohanty calls putting the world 'Under Western Eyes' (Mohanty, 1998). Taking a reflexive position in the research process constitutes a methodological strategy for minimising the risk of letting our own values, identities, and social statuses affect our research and our relationships with participants (Reinharz, 1992). She means that reflexive self-awareness provides us with a better understanding of how our identities and values affect our relationships with those we study. As Haraway (1988) argues, a reflexive position and a better understanding of who we are, as researchers and individuals, will help us to reflect upon what knowledge we are producing and for whom. In this work, I have tried to combine critical theories and perspectives with reflexive awareness, in order to avoid 'contaminating' my material and its analysis.

Scientific conducts, then, must confront basic epistemological issues of knowledge and knowing, including knowledge organisation, methods, precision and rigour. Specifically, I would argue that social work, as a scientific or knowledge-driven endeavour, needs to embrace contradictions and ambiguity as it reflects the uncertainty in our current world. An important norm of social work, as an integrative scientific discipline, is universality, meaning that its knowledge and practice is open for everyone, irrespective of individual or group characteristics such as 'race', gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, nationality or religion. Social work has always respected diversity and valued equality and sought to minimise discrimination in both practice and scientific work (Barak & Brekke, 2014).

Anthony Giddens separates theories from theoretical approaches. He argues that theories are descriptions or explanations, whereas theoretical approaches are particular philosophical standpoints: they represent particular discourses, positions or standpoints from which to make sense of the world. In recent times, it has been argued that neither conventional research nor

conventional theory can claim to have any monopoly over what is or is not valid knowledge. Social work theory and social work research have been criticised for not fully including the experiential knowledge of service users. Opening up the concept of knowledge to multiple sources of 'evidence' means to attend to the voices of service users, caregivers and practitioners (Trevillion, 2008).

Beresford argues that service users' knowledge is inextricable from their experiences, as well as from their theorising; thus, the involvement of service users in research is of great importance as it produces new ideas and new insights (Beresford, 2000). Traditionally, service users' first-hand knowledge has often been ignored and devalued in research because they, as individuals and groups, are viewed as 'too close to the problem'. Thus, those who are subjected to discrimination and oppression face further discrimination and marginalisation by being seen as a less reliable source of knowledge; indeed, research based on such assumptions plays its part in the 'othering' of people (Beresford, 2013).

Furthermore, the concept of social work knowledge needs to be inclusive and to incorporate all the principles of diversity that are central to the contemporary vision of the profession (Trevillion, 2008). All forms of knowledge are considered relevant and used in ways that can guide understanding and action (Trevithick, 2008). It has been suggested that service-users' involvement in research is likely to especially benefit those who traditionally are seen as 'the other' (Beresford, 2013), such as migrants, including URM. Barnes and Cotterell (2011) argue that the inclusion of service users in research enables a more equal relationship to be formed between professionals and users. Further, it also acknowledges that service users' contribution is important and it recognises their expertise in understanding their own experience. Excluding service users from research concerning them is, indeed, incompatible with the values associated with social work and social inclusion (Beresford, 2000).

The use of theory in qualitative research

Social sciences have discussed the use of theory in social scientific research for a long time. It is almost impossible to separate theory from methodology in qualitative enquiry because as Denzin and Lincoln (2005: 30) argue, the researcher:

Approaches the world with a set of ideas, a framework (theory, ontology) that specifies a set of questions (epistemology) that he/she examines in specific ways (methodology, analysis).

It is widely held that theory as a systematic and coherent assumption about the world around us, and about how to understand different phenomenon, informs the question a researcher raises and methodologically seeks to answer. Researchers do not enter a field without some theory-driven specifications and expectations (Burrell & Morgan, 1979). As Kelly (2010) puts it, the quality of a qualitative research study will be influenced by how the researcher attends to theoretical concerns at different stages of the research. This means that theoretical considerations play a part at all stages of the research process. The downplay of the role of theory in qualitative research not only creates inconsistencies for the comprehensive analysis of the collected data, but also difficulties for formulating research questions and discussing the methodology of research. It is also important to consider the difference between 'method' and 'methodology'. Method is the technical tool, the technique of collecting data, such as interviews, participant observation or focus groups; but methodology is about how we do research, how we analyse our collected data, and how the findings will be understood. Theory informs the researcher at all stages of research and is an important factor in research design. Theory helps the researcher to move behind the surface-level description to more in-depth analysis (Kelly, 2010).

However, we have to be cautious about bounding ourselves to any given theory, which would become an unchangeable frame for the research. Such a rigid use of theory will limit our creativity and is a crucial challenge to generating new theoretical perspectives in qualitative research. Research literature warns us against being too theoretically predetermined when conducting inductively oriented qualitative research, as this may prematurely lock our analytical focus and blind us from imaginative theorising and from revealing new insights and theoretical breakthroughs (Andersen & Kragh, 2010; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Maxwell, 1996; Weick, 1989).

A common misconception in both quantitative and qualitative research is that a researcher is required to enter a field of study without any theoretical ballast. This perspective, which has highly been influenced by the research tradition of Grounded Theory, is based on the false assumption that the researcher is a tabula rasa upon which reality can be imprinted through the research process. On the contrary, researchers should be sensitive to pre-existing theoretical frameworks, as part of the developing inter-subjectivity

and validity of qualitative research. Reflecting on pre-existing theory can be understood as part of the process where researchers engage in a discourse with the scientific community (Andersen & Kragh, 2010).

Providing deeper understanding of the reality surrounding us in general, and a phenomenon in particular, requires theoretical frames. As Leedy and Ormrod (2005: 4) put it, 'A theory is an organized body of concepts and principles intended to explain a particular phenomenon'. Theories explain 'How' and 'Why' something operates as it does (Johnson & Christensen, 2007: 7). Theoretical perspectives used in this study will help me in analysing which global and national processes operate behind migration of URM and the way the Swedish reception system functions in a time of increasing global migration.

Studying social context and the meanings of unaccompanied refugee minors: Adopting a qualitative design

For this research project, a qualitative approach was chosen to examine URM's living conditions and their personal experiences of migration and settling in a new country, as well as to study social workers' professional skills in working with URM. Qualitative enquiry makes it possible to explore these issues from the perspective of those involved: URM themselves (to explore the various motives behind migration, aspects of the actual migration journey, how they perceive the support available to them in Sweden, and their outlooks on the future), but also social workers involved in working with URM (to capture their understanding of challenges related to minors' living conditions in Sweden). I therefore sought to seek answers to my research questions (see Chapter 1) by framing my empirical study around eliciting in-depth descriptions and perceptions regarding personal experience and opinion.

Qualitative research is a holistic approach and its research methods provide ways of operationalising research questions, with the aim of answering them. Qualitative research is usually applied to seek answers to questions concerning the complex nature of phenomena under study, and the purpose is to describe and understand the phenomena from the subject's standpoint (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001). It can also be described as an unfolding model that occurs in natural settings, which enables the researcher to achieve a level of detail in their analyses not possible in more clinical and detached forms of research (Creswell, 1994). Moreover, it involves systematic collection, organisation and interpretation of the textual material thus derived from talking with and asking research participants about their lives; it is used in the

exploration of the meanings of social phenomena, as experienced by individuals themselves (Malterud, 2001). To understand the way people act and to distinguish or discern different patterns of behaviour, then, a qualitative study is considered appropriate. The purpose of the qualitative method in this specific study is to create a greater and deeper understanding of the contemporary situation of the increasing migration of URMs to Sweden and how it can affect people in various ways. Furthermore, it also makes it possible to intertwine individual experience, or realities, with structural dimensions. Migration is a cause and a consequence of wider social processes, and therefore it cannot be analysed as separate from other social, economic and political issues. Along with many other researchers (e.g., Chase et al., 2008; Goodman, 2004; Herz & Lalander, 2018, 2017; Kohli, 2011; Lalander & Herz, 2018; Lalander & Raoof, 2016; Luster et al., 2010; Ní Raghallaigh & Gilligan, 2010; Sirriyeh, 2013; Vervliet et al., 2015, 2013; Wernersjö, 2012, 2014, 2015), I consider URMs to be dynamic human agents who are part of systemic contexts at both micro- and macro-levels, and who, at the same time, exhibit both vulnerabilities and abilities/capacities. Qualitative methods are further characterised by an approach focused on depth rather than breadth, the basic idea being to analyse participants' own subjective feelings and perceptions through rich descriptive answers - suitable for this study with its focus on URMs own in-depth descriptions about the past, the current and the future (and their similarities and disparities), as well as professionals' experiences of working with them.

Data collection

As was established in the previous section, this dissertation has adopted a qualitative approach. More specifically, the methods used for collecting the empirical material that forms the basis of my research were, firstly, analysis of documents and auditory material and, secondly, qualitative semi-structured interviewing - a combination that has aimed to supply a substantial source of qualitative data (Patton, 2015).

Documentary and auditory material

In public debates on current political and social issues, the mass media play a central role as they monitor the debates and decisions of political elites. In doing so, they act as a major source of information for a majority of citizens. Extended research on mass medias' key position in public political debates has confirmed that media content affects individual opinions. When

discussing the phenomenon of immigration in general, and increasing immigration of URM in particular, mass media debates influence *what* people think about increasing migration and *how* they think about it. The framing of a certain issue has been shown to influence interpretations, feelings and attitudes among the public (Wettstein, 2014) – and this includes the issue of migration.

In a sense, migration is nothing more than geographical movements of human beings. However, such movements are shaped by politics, which have a crucial impact on society and peoples' lives. Migration is also frequently a hugely *politicised* issue, often raising significant controversies. Migrants' opportunities, performances and behaviours are shaped and determined by the immigration and residence rights they are granted or, indeed, refused (Düvell, 2012). The political debate on immigration and integration has been one of the most important electoral issues since the Swedish election of 1990 and the entrance of the first xenophobic party, New Democracy (ND), into the Swedish parliament. The electoral success of ND subsequently influenced other established parties, who incorporated some of the 'critical' standpoints of ND within their own party programmes – specifically, about restriction of immigration and in increasing demand on immigrants' adjustment to 'Swedish norms and values' (Kamali, 2006a, 2009). The role of the Swedish media, too, in creating a sense of 'Us-and-Them' thinking has been discussed by many researchers (Camauër & Norhstedt, 2006). In the election campaign of 1994, the discourse regarding immigrants was mainly dominated by concern about the *number* of immigrants ('there are too many immigrants in the country'); the dominating discourse of 1998, meanwhile, was specifically the problem of '*unemployed* immigrants'; and the dominating discourse of the electoral campaign of 2002 was 'the *integration* problem of immigrants' (Boréus, 2006). The increasing importance of the question of immigration in Sweden resulted latterly in an adaptation strategy by established mainstream parties. Many of these parties tried to openly address the problem of immigrants' integration in order to halt the rise of a new xenophobic and racist party, the Sweden Democrats (SD). However, this adaptation strategy failed and SD continued to increase its electoral success and influence (Kamali, 2009). In the election of 2010, SD succeeded in gaining 5.7 per cent of the total votes and thereby entered the Swedish parliament. The election of 2014 showed further success for SD as they succeeded in gaining 9.67 per cent of votes, thus becoming one of the most influential and important parties in parliament. In the latest election (of 2018), SD gained 17.53 per cent of all votes (see Chapter 4 for more discussion).

This research, therefore, drew on a range of documentary and auditory material concerning recent and contemporary political debates on immigration. Documentary material specifically was selected because of this troubling backdrop. I believe it is important to examine the Swedish political parties' reactions to increasing immigration, and this is something that has, therefore, formed a component of my research. By acknowledging the recent and current political climate in Sweden, it provides the background and context for the later parts of the study. In this study, the documentary and auditory material was selected from the 'debate pages' in two morning journals, *Svenska Dagbladet* (SvD) and *Dagens Nyheter* (DN), and two tabloid journals, *Aftonbladet* and *Expressen*. Political debates concerning immigration, which were broadcast on Swedish National Radio (SR) and the two largest Swedish TV channels, Swedish National Television (SVT, channel 1 and 2) and TV4, were also analysed.

Interviews

Qualitative interviewing is generally seen as being flexible; the interviewer adjusts and responds to the interviewee. There is a great interest in the participant's point of view: detailed and comprehensive answers are desired, new questions may arise due to the respondent's replies, and the order of questions may be revised (Bryman & Bell, 2007). Interviews typically attempt to capture the individual experience of participants, in order to understand the experience of other people in similar situations (Flick, 2007). In this study, semi-structured interviews are used, based around open-ended questions. The following five categories of people have been chosen to participate in the study:

1. Unaccompanied refugee minors
2. Carers working with URM's living in residential homes
3. 'Staff from family-homes' (families who harbour URM's)
4. Legal guardians
5. Municipal social workers working with URM's

Prior to the interviews, I compiled two interview guides, which covered a handful of topics - one for the URM's and another one for the professionals. The URM's were asked questions related to the following topics: 'background and upbringing', 'previous living situation', 'the migration journey', 'current living

situation’ and *‘ambitions for the future’*. The carers, ‘staff from family-homes’, legal guardians and municipal social workers, meanwhile, were asked questions about these topics: *‘education level and previous work experiences’*, *‘knowledge about the URM’s and their migration journeys’*, *‘experiences of working specifically with URM’s’* and *‘perceptions and work experiences of social inclusion and integration’*. The strength of this form of interview guide is that it meant participants were asked similar questions but, at the same time, they were given the option to bring in other perspectives and questions that the interview guide may have neglected to include (Flick, 2007). An example of a new perspective being put forward in this study concerns what can be referred to as the ‘age dilemma’. Originally, the question of the URM’s age was not a focus in this study, but it could not be ignored as, despite not being specifically asked about the matter, the first interviewees shed light on exactly such a dilemma in their work with the URM’s. It should be mentioned that during the same time period that the interviews took place, a large interest was arising in political and media debates regarding URM’s being truthful about being minors. In the aftermath of the ‘refugee crisis’ in 2015, governmental age assessments of URM’s seeking asylum have increasingly concluded that many individuals are actually over the age of 18 and are pretending to be minors (Lundberg, 2018). Thus, I find it likely that such current events will have influenced the interviews with the carers, ‘staff from family-homes’, legal guardians and municipal social workers. There is also an increasing research interest in the accuracy of the age assessment measures and the ethical dilemmas concerning such procedures - procedures which may have devastating consequences for the URM’s future life opportunities in the new country (e.g., De Sanctis V et al., 2016; Kenny & Loughry, 2018; Pradella et al., 2017). In this respect, my focus in this study regarding the ‘age dilemma’ is to explore the reasons behind the URM’s ‘necessary lies’ about their real age in relation to their asylum process.

In line with this relative flexibility of interview content, semi-structured interviewing also generated the opportunity to ask open-ended and follow-up questions, which can be necessary when seeking comprehensive and descriptive answers (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). For instance, open-ended questions allowed the participants a greater freedom to compose their answers (Flick, 2007) and also to enter into dialogue with me, and from this I was able to yield rich data and, in turn, direct quotations from people about their personal experiences, opinions, feelings and knowledge (Patton, 2015). Although the interview guides were adjusted for each group of participants, much of the content was, however, based on the same topics in order to cover

various perspectives on a given matter; this also made it possible to compare participants' answers against each other. For instance, the URM's direct knowledge and personal experience regarding their different reasons for migration, and the migration journey itself, could be compared with the carers' and municipal social workers' knowledge about it. Thus, semi-structured interviewing afforded me both flexibility and structure, in keeping me ultimately focused on certain predetermined topics during each interview, while also providing much space for individual variations in detail.

Sampling for the interviews

Qualitative inquiry typically focuses in depth on relatively small samples; one may learn a great deal from this if the participants are carefully selected. I have used purposeful sampling in order to select information-rich cases, devising the five different categories of interviewee that I outlined in the previous section, with this in mind. Studying such cases aims to yield insights and deeper understanding rather than empirical generalisations (Patton, 2015). Despite the wide use of purposeful sampling in academia, there are several challenges in identifying and applying the appropriate purposeful sampling strategy in any given study. For instance, the range of variation in the sample to be drawn via purposive sampling is often not really known at the outset of a study (Palinkas et al., 2003).

Sampling is not merely a question of selecting participants for interview; it also involves selecting sites where such people can be found (Flick, 2007). For instance, I found that the most efficient and suitable way to contact carers and municipal social workers was via their managers. Each municipality in Sweden has an official website dedicated to representing their organisations and the services provided. From these websites, I was able to find contact information, telephone numbers and email addresses for the heads of the units responsible for accommodation for URM's. Most municipalities in Sweden have chosen to operate children's homes for URM's according to regulations for so called 'homes for care or residence', referred to as 'residential homes' (EMN, 2014). Through personal networking, namely in respect of key informants, I was able to contact three persons from 'family-homes' and five URM's who agreed to participate. When selecting key informants, the criterion was that they 'should occupy roles that make them knowledgeable about the issues being researched and be able and willing to communicate with the researcher' (George & Reve, 1982).

I could not approach the URM's directly since the majority were under the age of 18, and thus had not attained the legal age for consent to procedures involved in research. In order for me to gain access to them, I had to rely on so-called (adult) gatekeepers; in this study, the gatekeepers were carers working at the residential homes, 'staff from family-homes', and the minors' legal guardian. First, I contacted the residential homes and the 'staff from family-homes', sending them written information about the study and its purpose. They were asked to pass on this information to the URM's in their care. This process opens up the option for the adults to decide which minors to inform about the study, thus, avoiding me making contact with those who are experiencing emotional distress. After the minors expressed interest in participating in the study, I had to retrieve consent from their legal guardian. I then proceeded to make concrete arrangements for/schedule the interview.

A number of organisations and agencies stress the significance of URM's being provided with reliable and competent interpreters where necessary. The majority of newly arrived immigrants need a reliable and readily available interpreter - someone who not only speaks their language and understands their dialect and customs but is also a person the minor can trust (Hopkins, 2008). Three interviewees required assistance from an interpreter. In total, two different interpreters were used and both of these were people who were close to the URM's concerned and who were acting in an informal capacity (there was not enough time to book an independent professional interpreter). In such a context, of another person being present and involved in the interview, there is a risk that the interviewed participant might have felt limited in their answers and may have adjusted the information they subsequently gave; indeed, when I came to transcribe these interviews, I did observe that answers in relation to certain themes and questions were often relatively short. Therefore, it can be challenging to conduct research across languages, and this added another layer to my need to be reflexive as a qualitative researcher (Temple & Edwards, 2002).

Some challenges with interviewing unaccompanied refugee minors and professionals

In this work, interviews have been the primary method for collecting data. This method has allowed me to include narratives from both vulnerable groups in society (i.e. URM's) and professionals (such as carers, 'staff from family-homes', legal guardians and municipal social workers). It has been challenging to move back and forth between different and sometimes contradictory stories and perspectives. However, making connections

between the individual narratives and the structural realities has helped me to understand and critically analyse the URM's' perspectives as well as the professionals' positions. This may also have affected the outcome of the narratives in the interviews. I found that I received more in-depth information from those participants who I got in contact with through a key-informant they trusted, as opposed to those who agreed to participate following only direct contact with me. Thus, it is reasonable to believe that the participant's perception of me and my role affected their willingness to communicate and share information. Therefore, the outcome of an interview will differ depending on the context and who the interviewer is and what she represents (Andersen, 1993).

The participants expressed certain expectations concerning the outcome of the study - for example, that the results would contribute to solving problems of URM's' integration into Swedish society. Some URM's hoped that their participation would help future URM's arriving in Sweden. One of the prominent questions which surfaced during the interview and analysis process related to 'truth telling', which at times also challenged the reflexivity of the research process. How can one trust that the participant is telling the truth and telling the whole story is a common concern for qualitative researchers? This being said, narratives containing deliberate deceptions do not necessarily lack merit entirely, because, even when deceiving, the participant illuminates aspects of their reality given that there will be a reason behind 'the lie' (Banerjee et al., 2010; Joyce, 2015; Ning & Crossman, 2007; Oliveira & Levine, 2008). For example, exaggeration and distortion might be caused by the participant's subconscious or conscious need to reconstruct a situation or reposition themselves in the story (Joyce, 2015). It is more fruitful to explore what 'the lie' reveals about a person's perspectives and perceptions. It is therefore important to address the distortion when such a situation is detected; a recommended procedure for doing so is by comparing a participant's account with the accounts of other participants (Atkinson, Coffey & Delamont, 2003). Thus, by including URM's and people who work directly with them, this study has sought to provide a multidimensional understanding of different motives and realities. Qu and Dumay (2011) point out that distortion may arise in areas where politically sensitive issues are exposed; disclosure of certain information without reflecting on or analysing the participant's social position can cause harm for the researched population (Atkinson, Coffey & Delamont, 2003).

Introducing the participants

I have conducted interviews with 29 participants: 12 URMs, nine carers, three persons from 'family-homes', two legal guardians and three municipal social workers. In accordance with the saturation principle, I continued to collect empirical material until no more new information was obtained (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). The following is a description of the five categories of respondents participating in this study and an introduction to each of these participants (pseudonyms are used to protect their anonymity).

Unaccompanied refugee minors

Inclusion criteria for the URMs consisted of permanent residence status (PUT). This was primarily for ethical reasons; being in the midst of an asylum procedure is recognised as constituting an especially stressful period of time. Moreover, a permanent residency is also fundamental for the individual's future integration process into Swedish society. Initially, I set out to search for minors who were living in residential homes and 'family-homes', with their ages ranging from 15 to 18. However, this was subsequently extended to include individuals who were living by themselves in a 'support residence', something which came about following discussion with a particular 'gatekeeper'. It is worth mentioning that when a minor becomes an adult at the age of 18 they are required to move out of the residential home in which they lived and into an apartment. They live on their own but obtain minimal support for between two and three years. A woman working as the head of unit for a couple of residential homes was especially helpful in my search for participants. About a week after I had initially contacted her, she called me and asked if I might be interested in talking to those who had turned 18 and therefore moved out from the residential homes and into a 'support residence'. This adjusted the age group upward, to 15 to 20. I decided that it would be beneficial as the study aims to capture a variety of experiences of living conditions in Sweden. I therefore interviewed two males who had experience of living in both residential homes and 'support residences', while I also interviewed six male URMs and four female URMs living in 'family-homes'. All of the URMs interviewed originate from Afghanistan. This was not a criterion but occurred coincidentally; however, one might say it reflects reality since they represent the largest group of URMs living in Sweden (SMB, 2019). When they were interviewed, the two males in 'support residence' had been living in Sweden for seven and five years, respectively. The other participants, meanwhile, had been in Sweden for a shorter period of time - between six

months and two years at the time of interview. I will introduce each of these participants with some brief biographical details.

Khalid

Khalid is an 18-year-old male who was born in Afghanistan but moved to Iran at the age of four. His family consists of a mother, a father and four younger siblings. Khalid arrived in Sweden in 2011 and was placed in a residential home. He is currently living by himself in a 'support residence' apartment.

Jamal

Jamal is a 20-year-old male who was born and raised in Afghanistan. His family consists of a mother, a stepfather, two younger half-sisters and two younger half-brothers. His father died when Jamal was very young. Jamal arrived in Sweden when he was 13 years old and was placed in a residential home. He is currently living by himself in a 'support residence' apartment.

Basar

Basar is a 16-year-old male who was born and raised in Afghanistan. His family consists of a mother, a younger sister and a younger brother. He says that his father was murdered when he was a child. Basar arrived in Sweden in autumn of 2015 and was placed in a single-staff 'family-home', where he is currently living with three other URMs.

Taj

Taj is a 15-year-old male who was born in Afghanistan but grew up in Iran. His family consists of a mother, a stepfather, a younger brother and a younger half-brother. He says that his father was murdered during the war when Taj was very young. Taj arrived in Sweden in autumn of 2015 and was placed in a single-staff 'family-home'; he is currently living there with three other URMs.

Abbas

Abbas is a 16-year-old male was born in Afghanistan but moved to Iran at the age of 10. He arrived in Sweden at the end of 2015 and was placed in a single-staff 'family-home', where he is currently living with three other URMs.

Abdullah

Abdullah is a 17-year-old male who was born in Afghanistan; he moved to Iran at the age of 14. His family consists of a mother, a father and a younger sister. Abdullah arrived in Sweden in autumn of 2015 and was placed in residential home. After a year, he was moved to a single-staff 'family-home', which he is currently still living in.

Hossein

Hossein is a 17-year-old male who was born in Afghanistan but grew up Iran. His family consists of a mother, a father and three younger siblings. Hossein arrived in Sweden in 2015 and was first placed in a residential home and later in a single-staff 'family-home'; he is currently living there with one other URM.

Ahmad

Ahmad is a 17-year-old male who was born in Afghanistan; he moved to Iran when he was five years old. His family consists of a mother, a father and four younger siblings. Ahmad arrived in Sweden in 2015 and was placed in a single-staff 'family-home', where he is currently living with two other URMs.

Leyla

Leyla is a 17-year-old female who was born in Afghanistan, but who moved to Iran when she was nine years old. Her family consists of a mother, a father and two brothers. Leyla arrived in Sweden in 2015 and was placed in a 'family-home', which she is currently still living in.

Maryam

Maryam is a 16-year-old female who was born in Afghanistan but grew up in Iran. Her family consists of a mother, a father and two siblings. Maryam arrived in Sweden in 2015 and was placed in a family-home. After a year, she was re-placed in a single-staff 'family-home', which she is currently still living in with one other URM.

Shirin

Shirin is a 16-year-old female who was born and raised in Afghanistan. Her family consists of a mother, a stepfather and five siblings. Shirin arrived in

Sweden in 2015 and was placed in a dual-staff 'family-home', which she is currently still living in.

Golnar

Golnar is a 17-year-old female who was born and raised in Afghanistan. She has two sisters and one brother; they became separated from their mother and father when they tried to reach Pakistan. She does not know what has happened to her parents. Golnar arrived in Sweden in 2015 and was placed in a single-staff 'family-home'; she is currently living there with one other URM.

Carers

The carers were contacted through the head of units in the residential homes and via personal networking. There were no inclusion criteria for the carers other than having past or current experience of working with URMs in residential homes. The reason for this was to attain carers of various ages with different backgrounds and levels of work experience. This group of participants consists of three females and six males, with ages ranging from 31 to 57. The majority of the participants had worked between one and four years as a carer. I will now introduce each of these participants.

Armin

Armin is a 57-year-old male with German background who has been living in Sweden for 11 years. He has a degree in Higher Education and had worked as a leisure-time pedagogue and immigrant coordinator in his country of origin. In his work as an immigrant coordinator, he came into contact with URMs from Afghanistan. Armin has worked as a carer in Sweden for four years.

Nicholas

Nicholas is a 31-year-old male with Swedish background. He has a degree in Higher Education and has worked with multiple jobs involving youths; he has also worked within the church. Nicholas has worked as a carer for four years.

Hasan

Hasan is a 50-year-old male with Iranian background who has been living in Sweden for 25 years. He has been self-employed and has also worked with

delinquent youths. Hasan worked as a carer for five years and is currently a teaching assistant.

Martin

Martin is a 54-year-old male with Swedish background. He has an upper secondary school education and has worked as a leisure-time pedagogue, a carpenter, a trucker and an assistant nurse. Martin has worked as a carer for one year.

Joseph

Joseph is a 37-year-old male with Swedish background. He has an upper secondary school education and has been working in different types of jobs since graduating, but mostly in construction. He has worked in residential homes for both delinquent youths and URM. He is currently the manager for several residential homes for URM.

Karim

Karim is a 38-year-old male with Iranian background. He has a higher education degree and has previously worked with youths in treatment for substance abuse and deviant sexual behaviour. Through such work, he has come into contact with several URM.

Lena

Lena is a 33-year-old female with Swedish background. She has a degree in higher education and has worked as a counselling and treatment pedagogue, as a teaching assistant and as a salesperson. Lena has been working as a carer for one year.

Astrid

Astrid is 57-year-old female with Swedish background. She has a degree in higher education and has worked as a pre-school teacher and as a travel administrator. Astrid has worked as a carer for one-and-a-half years.

Elisabeth

Elisabeth is a 36-year-old female with Swedish background. She has an upper secondary school education and has worked as a personal carer, as a home

carer for the elderly, and also with delinquent youths. Elisabeth worked as a carer for four years and is currently working as an integration coordinator.

Staff from family-homes

'Family-homes' in Sweden harbour children who are normally under the age of 18 and lack parental care. Staff from 'family-homes', who are harbouring URM, are interviewed in this study. They were contacted via personal networking. I will now introduce the three participants.

Danesh

Danesh is a 54-year-old male who was born in Iran and has been living in Sweden for 24 years. He has a degree in higher education and is self-employed. He has previously been a 'family-home' for delinquent youths and has been a 'family-home' for URM since 2015. Currently, there are four URM living with him. Danesh also owns a private company aimed at receiving URM.

Saleh

Saleh is a 63-year-old male who was born in Iran and has been living in Sweden since the early 1980s. He is self-employed. He has been a 'family-home' for several URM; currently there is one URM living with him. Saleh also owns a private company aimed at receiving URM.

Cyrus

Cyrus is a 40-year-old male with Iranian background. He has a higher education degree and has worked in construction and at several restaurants. He has four years of work experience as a carer in a residential home for URM. He is currently working at a restaurant, and is a 'family-home' for two URM.

Legal guardians

In accordance with Swedish law, all URM arriving in Sweden must be assigned a legal guardian, which is a person whose role is to safeguard the interests of the URM. Prior to meeting and interviewing the URM, I had to obtain written consent from their legal guardian. Upon doing this, I took the opportunity to ask them if they wanted to participate in the study as well. I will now introduce the two legal guardians.

Björn

Björn is a 67-year-old male with Swedish background. He has a higher education degree and has worked as a market specialist and owned multiple businesses. He has been a legal guardian for adults with cognitive disabilities for many years. Björn has been a legal guardian for more than 30 URMs during the past six years; he also educates future legal guardians for URMs.

Farideh

Farideh is 45-year-old female with Iranian background. She has a degree in higher education and has worked with computer programming, newly arrived refugees and the integration projects for immigrants. Farideh has worked as a legal guardian for nine months, currently being the legal guardian of two URMs.

Municipal social workers

Each URM is appointed a municipal social worker, who holds the major responsibilities for the well-being and settlements of the URMs. The sole inclusion criterion for these participants was past or current experience of working with URMs. My ambition from the outset of this study was to interview several municipal social workers. However, during 2015, when I was searching for participants, the welfare system of Sweden was facing huge challenges in meeting the needs of URMs in the face of the 'refugee crisis' and the arrival of 35.369 URMs. Some municipal social workers were forced to cancel their interview with me due to their heavy workload. However, I obtained very similar information from the three interviews I conducted; thus, I consider the empirical material from these interviews to have achieved saturation. I will now introduce these interviewees.

Bodil

Bodil is a 53-year-old female with Swedish background. She has a higher education degree in social work and has worked as a caseworker at the Social Insurance Agency. Bodil has been working as an URM-caseworker for six years.

Mary

Mary is a 35-year-old female with Swedish background. She has a higher education degree in social work and has worked as a child welfare caseworker. Mary has been working as an URM-caseworker for three years.

Lisa

Lisa is a 27-year-old-female with Swedish background. She has a higher education degree in social work and has worked as an LSS-caseworker (providing support and service to persons with certain functional disabilities) and as a carer in a residential home for URM. Lisa has been working as an URM-caseworker for five months.

All of the included participants in this study were free to choose the setting for the interview. I asked them when and where they preferred to meet but also offered a secluded area when I had access to this. This was done on the assumption that they would feel more at ease with the whole interview situation when giving them the option to decide on its location. In total, 11 participants (six carers, the two males living in 'support residence' apartments, one URM and the two legal guardians) wanted to do the interview at the location I had to offer. All other interviews were conducted in a location of the participants' choice, apart from those with two of the municipal social workers, which were conducted via telephone.

When arriving at the interview site, I briefly recapitulated to the interviewee the aim and the purpose of the study and asked if they had any questions regarding the research or their role as a participant. The only questions I received were concerned with how many interviews I had conducted prior to my interview with them and how many interviews I intended to conduct. Right before the beginning of each interview, I reminded the participant of their options to either end their participation at any given time, or decline answering certain questions without further explanation. After each interview, I encouraged them to contact me if any type of questions or thoughts surfaced regarding the study or its outcome. All of this was in the interests of ensuring ethical practice throughout the research; and matters of ethics specifically - and some of the challenges I faced, particularly in terms of researching the lives of URM as children and young people - forms the focus of the discussion that now follows.

Ethical considerations

Conducting my research from a critical social work perspective, I also strove to abide by social work's core values in how I worked and acted; as articulated in the IFSW Global Statement of Ethical Guidelines (IFSW, 2012) and Global Ethics in Social Work (IASSW, 2018), social work studies ought to realise human justice, human rights and interpersonal respect (e.g., Humphreys, 2008). The reason for including participants under the age of 18 in this study is related to Article 12 of the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child (1989), which emphasises autonomy and children's rights to form and freely express their views on all matters and for their views to be heard. This suggests that minors ought to be encouraged to express themselves and participate in decisions concerning their own lives, thus recognising the minor as a competent agent who is able to provide valid accounts of their experiences (Kirova & Emme, 2007). I consider it important to include the voices of URM in studies concerning them, even while their inclusion does raise challenges – as I will now discuss.¹

Central to ethical considerations when interviewing children and young people in general, and URM in particular, is the notion of consent (consent is, indeed, a critical issue when interviewing people of *any* age but it is heightened when conducting research involving participants who are under 18). In accordance with Swedish ethical principles on conducting research, written consent was thus gained prior to the interviews with the URM. This document described the aim of the study, the participant's role, and what the results would be used for. It was signed by the URM and their legal guardian before the interview took place. I took seriously the note of warning that I had identified in the literature, that researchers should be cautious that young people give their consent freely and without coercion – this concern being further heightened by the potentially vulnerable context in which my participants, specifically, were situated, as refugees *and* unaccompanied ones at that. Drawing upon their own experience of researching unaccompanied children seeking asylum, Thomas and Byford (2003) suggest that some young people believe that participation will help their asylum application or affect the services they receive. I was very much aware that care should be taken to explain that this would not be the case. Although the URM I interviewed had obtained a permanent residency (and so the 'will it help my asylum

¹ Prior to carrying out the interviews in this study, I put together a proposal of my empirical research that underwent ethical vetting, which was approved by the regional Ethical Review Board (*Etikprövningsnämnden*) in the city of Umeå in Sweden.

application?' issue was not applicable), I still explained that whatever they decided to tell me could not, in any way, jeopardise their status, nor impact issues related to future family reunifications. Nonetheless, the participants did express certain expectations regarding the outcome of the study, although typically this was articulated in terms of 'helping others' in an abstract sense - for example, hoping that the results would contribute to solving problems of URM's integration into Swedish society - as opposed to directly voicing concerns about their own or their family's situation. Some URM's hoped that their participation would help future URM's arriving in Sweden.

On a few rare occasions, the minors declined to answer a certain question or did not care to elaborate further on a matter when requested to do so. This was mainly concerning questions related to specific details of their current relationship with their original family. When this occurred, I reminded them that it was fine not to answer or elaborate, and I proceeded to the next question or topic. Preventing harm is a general ethical rule among all disciplines (Peled & Leichtentritt, 2002). This rule was also taken into consideration when interviewing the carers, the 'staff from family-homes', legal guardians and municipal social workers, by making sure the questions regarding their practical work were of a descriptive nature and could not be seen as criticising them.

Before and during the interview, I was aware of the risk that some questions could possibly cause participants emotional distress, even while I always made clear to them (as explained above) that they were not obligated to answer anything. Meanwhile, *after* each interview was finished, I consulted with the participant about how they felt and informed them that if any negative feelings arose any time after our meeting, they should contact me. As it turned out, I did not experience anything of such a nature, but if that *had* been the case, I intended to inform the 'staff from family-homes' (or, for those in 'support residence', a relevant person) about the situation and about my responsibility to assist with adequate help.

Method of analysis: Qualitative content analysis

All collected empirical material was analysed by using qualitative content analysis. It is defined as a detailed and systematic method, which examines the content of a particular body of material, with the purpose of identifying patterns, categories and themes (Patton, 2015). Content analysis, as an approach, did initially deal with the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication (Graneheim &

Lundman, 2004). However, this approach was considered to be a simplistic technique that did not lend itself to detailed statistical analysis. It was also argued that content analysis was not sufficiently qualitative in nature. Due to such criticism, content analysis evolved over time to also include interpretations of latent content. This qualitative approach deals with developing understanding of the meaning of communication, and it also allows us to identify critical processes. Qualitative content analysis is concerned with meanings, intentions, consequences and context, whereas quantitative content analysis can be described as a 'counting game', where the researcher is searching for reoccurring words and phrases with the end result being simplistic descriptions of data (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008; Patton, 2015).

Conducting qualitative content analysis often implies a creative process, where the investigator searches for categories, themes and patterns in order to assess which data is relevant and meaningful for the study (Patton, 2015). There are no precise or agreed-on terms that describe the varieties and processes of qualitative content analysis (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001; Patton, 20015). Therefore, it is recognised as a flexible method in terms of research design (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). Although it usually refers to analysing different forms of textual material (Patton, 2015), the raw material may be any type of communication, usually written materials like textbooks, novels, newspaper articles and email messages. It can also include other forms of communication such as music, pictures and political speeches (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). It has generated good results in studies in which large-scale material of mass media is being studied (Gerbner, 1969; Hardy et al., 2008; Kunkel et al., 2005). Using content analysis helps to reduce large amounts of material to concepts that describe the research phenomenon (Cavanagh, 1997; Elo & Kyngäs, 2008).

Content analysis methods are often used to analyse the interplay and the intersection of class, ethnicity, gender and power (Eliassi, 2010; Jönsson & Flem, 2018; Kondracki et al., 2002). A content analysis may also cover manifest and latent levels of meaning, as well as a combination of the two levels. The manifest level focuses on the more visible and obvious parts, while the latent level comprises an interpretation in which deeper aspects of meaning are sought in the text (Berg, 2004). In this study, the latent level is most suitable. The latent content of the material makes it possible to find connections between the visible and the invisible, the dominant and marginalised, and thus illuminate the mechanisms behind the production and reproduction privileges of power relations (Jönsson & Kamali, 2012).

The most suitable unit of analysis is whole interviews or observation-based field notes that are large enough to be considered as a whole and small

enough to be kept in mind as a context for meaning units during the analysis process (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008; Jönsson, 2014a). Graneheim and Lundman (2004) have proposed five steps for qualitative data analysis, which (as we will see shortly) is the procedure I followed, both in terms of the analysis of my documentary and auditory material and of my interview transcripts:

1. Transcribing and reading the whole text to get an overall understanding of the content.
2. Selecting meaning units. These are either words, sentences or paragraphs containing aspects related to each other.
3. Condensing the meaning units while still preserving the essential core of the text. This process is referred to as abstraction, which includes creation of codes, categories and themes on different levels. Labelling a condensed meaning unit with a code allows the data to be thought about in new and different ways.
4. Classifying similar primary codes in more comprehensive categories. A category is a group of content that shares commonality. A category mainly refers to a descriptive level of content and can thus be seen as an expression of the manifest content of the text. A category may also include a number of sub-categories.
5. Extracting themes from the data. Creating themes is a way to link the underlying meanings together in categories. A condensed meaning unit, a code or a category can fit into more than one theme. A theme can also be constructed by sub-themes or divided into sub-themes.

It is important to keep in mind that the process of analysis involves a back-and-forth movement between the whole and parts of the text (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004). The aim is to acquire a condensed and broad description of a phenomenon, and the result of the analysis is concepts or categories describing the phenomenon (Kyngäs & Vanhanen, 1999). The purpose is to provide knowledge, new insights and a representation of facts (Krippendorff, 1980).

In accordance with the Graneheim and Lundman's five-step model, then, I started by transcribing the TV and radio broadcasts I had selected that involved political debates on immigration. This, combined with the selected 'debate' articles from morning and tabloid journals, formed the whole body of this part of the analysis, which was read through multiple times to get an

overall understanding of the Swedish political context regarding migration and integration. In the second step, I used the theoretical framework of the critical social work perspective in order to select useful meaning units, in the form of paragraphs and sentences. As a third step, these meaning units were condensed to codes, on a more abstract level, which then defined the direction of further analysis. In the fourth step, similar primary codes were assembled into more comprehensive categories. The last step involved examining the categories and abstracting themes of a topical nature, the purpose of which is to symbolise the whole context. Four themes were developed from the documentary and auditory material: namely, 'Migration and us'; 'From the mission of saving women and children to the mission of saving Sweden'; 'The cost of migration to Sweden'; and 'From migration to integration'. The results of this part of the study are presented in Chapter 4. For the following three chapters I followed the same five-step model when analysing the interview transcripts. I read all of the transcripts several times in order to obtain an overall understanding of the URMs' life stories, living conditions and ambitions in Sweden, as well as the professionals' knowledge about, and experiences of, working with URMs and their social realities. In Chapter 5, the themes of 'Sweden as the final destination' and 'Framing asylum status' are presented. In Chapter 6, meanwhile, the theme of 'Swedish reception system's possibilities and shortcomings for integration of unaccompanied refugee minors' is presented. Finally, Chapter 7 discusses the theme of 'Insufficient knowledge and skills in working with the unaccompanied refugee minors'.

Although an established research method, qualitative research is faced with the challenges of 'trustworthiness'. To describe various aspects of trustworthiness, the concepts of credibility, dependability and transferability have been used in qualitative research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Manning, 1997; Potter & Levine-Donnerstein, 1999). Although the concepts are separate, they should be seen as intertwined and interconnected. 'Credibility' relates to central aspects of the research, concerning the selection of the specific research context, the participants and the data gathering approach, as well as the process of analysis. Another way to achieve credibility is to select the most appropriate meaning units, ones which are neither too broad (several paragraphs) nor too narrow (a single word). To facilitate judging the credibility of the findings, the researcher must demonstrate how meaning units and condensations are conducted. Additional to credibility of research findings is how well categories and themes cover data. Credibility is a question of how to judge similarities within and differences between categories. To approach this, the researcher can present quotations from the

text and/or seek agreement among co-researchers. The intent is to verify that data are labeled and sorted in the exact same, careful and comprehensive, way. Dependability deals with consideration of the stability of data over time and alterations made in the researcher's decisions during the analysis process. How consistent the data is can be illuminated in a detailed process; it enables future researchers to follow the different steps in order to replicate the study. Trustworthiness also consists of transferability, which addresses the extent to which the findings can be transferred to other contexts or groups. The researcher may suggest transferability but readers to play a role in deciding whether the findings are transferable or not. To enhance the transferability, it is valuable to give distinct descriptions of context, selection, participants, data collection and the analysis process, in combination with a rich and dynamic presentation of the findings that uses suitable quotations (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004).

In order to provide an overview of themes and categories developed from my interviews in this study, I have constituted the following table:

Chapter 5.

Meaning unit	Condensed meaning unit	Codes	Category	Theme
<p>URM: The only reason I came to Sweden was to get an education. I want to study, I want to become an engineer, I have ambitions, I want to stand on my own two feet and be able to make my own money and my own life.</p> <p>Carer: Some have high ambitions and want to educate themselves and they mean it, some are different. Many say that they want to educate themselves, but they just say that, they do not do anything about it.</p>	Be successful in Sweden	High educational ambition	Educational opportunities	Sweden as the final destination

<p>URM: I am worried about my family's living conditions back home; they will come to Sweden soon, I hope. I know they will.</p> <p>Carer: They are concerned about their families back home; what they do and how their situation is. They call home several times a day and talk to them.</p>	Be sure of family reunion	Family reunion	Possibilities of family reunion	Sweden as the final destination
<p>URM: Sweden has different opportunities for me, everybody said that. I have many friends who received their residential permit after a while. The Migration Board trusts you; it is easier to get a residential permit in Sweden than in any other country, like Italy or France.</p>	Easy to stay in Sweden	Residential permit	Liberal Swedish asylum policy	Sweden as the final destination

<p>Carer: It is for sure the Swedish liberal migration policy which encourage many to come here and seek asylum. Many of the URM's are well-aware of this fact.</p>				
<p>URM. My dad was killed by the Taliban, I do not know anything about my mother or my sisters and brothers, I have no contact with them.</p> <p>Carer: Many say that they have no clue about their families, they have to say that, I do not know if it is true or not. They say that they lost their parents and therefore they had to leave Afghanistan.</p> <p>URM: It is easier for boys to emigrate, it is dangerous, many</p>	<p>Had no protection; had to leave</p>	<p>Un-free emigration</p>	<p>Forced to leave country of origin</p>	<p>Framing asylum status</p>

<p>think that you can just go to the airport, get on a plane and come to Sweden. I have seen girls who have been raped by smugglers and others, it is not easy for girls to emigrate.</p> <p>Carer: There are girls who have been sexually abused or raped in Greece, or in refugee camps, during their migration to Sweden.</p>	Dangerous emigration	Who emigrates?	Selective male emigration	Framing asylum status
<p>URM: I am under the age of 18, it means that I am a child, they have to give me support and protection. What can I do? I have nobody in the world who can take care of me.</p> <p>Carer: Many are children, or they say that they are under the</p>	Should have (parental) protection	Be a child, not an adult	Framing childhood	Framing asylum status

<p>age of 18. Sweden has to provide protection for them.</p> <p>URM: I came directly to Sweden, nowhere else, ok I passed several European countries but I never stayed there, we could not ask for asylum there, we had been told to not leave our 'secure home'.</p> <p>Carer: Many say that they have not been in another EU country, but they lie, none of them could come directly to Sweden from Afghanistan or Iran or Pakistan. They know that, if they did, they had to apply for asylum there.</p>	<p>Came directly to Sweden</p>	<p>No chance of asylum in 'transit' countries</p>	<p>Not being in another EU country</p>	<p>Framing asylum status</p>
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Chapter 6.

Meaning unit	Condensed meaning unit	Codes	Category	Theme
<p>URM: I do not want to go to school, I never did. Even in my own country I did not go to school. I have worked my entire life and do not understand why I should go to school here. Give me a job instead.</p> <p>Carer: Many have never been to school in their own countries. The majority have a couple of years of elementary school education, nothing more, but our system forces them to go to school.</p>	Do not want to go to school	Negative to education	Schooling opportunities, contradictions of ambitions and realities	Swedish reception system's possibilities and shortcomings for integration of unaccompanied refugee minors

<p>URM: They give us everything, the money people receive for taking care of us in one month is more than what my family earned in one year in Afghanistan. I can buy whatever I wish and can eat whatever I wish, I am very pleased.</p> <p>Carer: The way we treat them is horrible. We consider everyone here to be child and in need of help and protection; we give them everything without them asking for it. They know about their 'entitlements', their rights, but know nothing about their responsibilities. They will not be able to take care of their own lives in Sweden, in the future. They have become used with 'unconditionality'.</p>	<p>Buy and eat whatever I wish</p>	<p>Unconditional entitlements</p>	<p>The Swedish generous allowance system and clientisation of unaccompanied refugee minors</p>	<p>Swedish reception system's possibilities and shortcomings for integration of unaccompanied refugee minors</p>
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<p>URM: They come here once a month, talk to me and leave. I do not know why they come, they just ask 'how are things going?' or 'are you happy with the place you are living at?'. They treat us as nothing, just wait and see; go to school and educate yourself, have a nice time here.</p> <p>Carer: Social authorities place the URM's here and then disappear for up to one month. They are not responding to our concerns about the children, they expect that we should do everything, take care of their psychological problems, their family problems, their personal problems, their integration, yeah, everything. I am very critical of this.</p>	<p>Social authorities do not take their responsibilities</p>	<p>Passive social authorities</p>	<p>Social authorities' working routines</p>	<p>Swedish reception system's possibilities and shortcomings for integration of unaccompanied refugee minors</p>
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Chapter 7.

Meaning unit	Condensed meaning unit	Codes	Category	Theme
<p>Municipal social workers: We do not know much about the URMs, we know that there is war going on, but why are they coming here? or how can their families let them leave their countries and start such a migration journey?</p> <p>Carers: Many municipal social workers do not know anything about the URMs, they just think that their backgrounds and earlier lives have nothing to do with their lives here.</p> <p>– We do not know anything about the minors, we only receive information about their age, their temporary social</p>	We do not know much about the URMs.	Lack of adequate knowledge	Knowledge about unaccompanied minors' increasing migration and diversities	Insufficient knowledge and skills in working with the unaccompanied refugee minors

<p>security number, which country they are from and which language they speak.</p> <p>– Municipal social workers do not understand the complexity of working with the minors; they put them here or in the residential homes and pay the subsidy to us but they do not really have any plans for the minor's life, problems and ambitions here.</p>				
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<p>Carers: The municipal social workers who work with the URM's are often young with no experiences or have never worked with such cases, they just do whatever we tell to them to do, they have no clue.</p> <p>– I admit, there are not many of us who work with the URM's who have adequate education or experiences of social work, it was an emergency solution.</p> <p>– Social authorities did not claim anything from us or other companies, they just gave the URM's to us and said 'here you go' and then we got paid.</p> <p>Municipal social worker: It was my first job. Initially I did not know much about the URM's, why they are here, who they are and so on. I had to ask others about almost everything.</p>	<p>Lack of adequate education or experience for working with the URM's</p>	<p>Lack of professional knowledge</p>	<p>Professional knowledge deficiencies about the unaccompanied refugee minors</p>	<p>Insufficient knowledge and skills in working with the unaccompanied refugee minors</p>
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<p>Municipal social workers: We had no time to do controls of the placements. You cannot imagine, sometimes we had to work to late afternoon to be able to find a place for the minors.</p> <p>– We had to find a place for them to live, had no time to control those places.</p> <p>– No, we have no routines for following-up the placements. This does not mean that we do not do this, but not according to some kind of document or on a regular basis.</p> <p>Carers: They expect us to do miracles, do everything, be their parents, control them so they do not commit crimes, force them to go to school, treat them both as children and as adults.</p>	<p>We have no routines for following up the placements</p>	<p>No regular follow ups</p>	<p>Lack of working methods, guidelines and follow-ups</p>	<p>Insufficient knowledge and skills in working with the unaccompanied refugee minors</p>
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<p>–They put the entire responsibility of their lives in Sweden on us.</p> <p>– They do not listen to us, they do not care, have no routines for handling different problems that occurs during the URM's placement here.</p> <p>– We do not know 'what to do' and 'how to do it', they just put them here. They do not give us any guidelines about how to work with different problems.</p> <p>– I have asked the municipal social workers for advice several times. I never receive any answers. Sometime they say 'I do not know', I said, 'then who is supposed to know?'.</p>				
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Chapter 3

Theoretical framework

The purpose of this chapter is to present the theoretical framework of the thesis. The theoretical perspectives of postcolonialism, neoliberalism and critical intersectionality, which are used in this work, will help to analyse the empirical material and improve our understanding of different power relations generating inequalities at structural, institutional and individual levels. The chosen theories provide deeper understanding of how the legacy of colonial history and its aftermath influence contemporary policies and organisational practices of immigrant-receiving countries, as well as the experiences of those considered and deemed as 'the others'. The postcolonial approach can critically highlight structural and institutional mechanisms behind increasing migration and help to explain why a country handles immigrants and their integration in a certain way. Combined with the concept of critical intersectionality, it may also help to understand URMs' situation after arrival. Intersectionality has the capacity to help analysing and understanding differences and the interconnections between and within social groups of people, advantaged as well as the disadvantaged. The critical approach on neoliberalism, and its influence on the state and its social policy and practices of social work, is highly relevant for the analysis of this research's empirical material.

Colonialism and postcolonialism

In order to comprehend global, political, economic and migration developments, and the injustices that follows with them, colonial history must be addressed. The term colonialism describes a dominant form of cultural exploitation between an indigenous or forcibly imported majority and a minority of foreign invaders (Osterhammel, 2005; Saïd, 1993). Colonialism has been a recurrent and widespread feature of human history since ancient times. Therefore, it is not solely limited to the expansion of various European powers into Africa, America and Asia, but it also includes earlier colonial conquests such as the expansion of the Roman Empire, the Aztec Empire, the Inca Empire, the Ottoman Empire and the Chinese Empire. The colonial encounters resulted in a process of un-forming and re-forming already existing communities. This involved a wide range of practices including trade, plunder, negotiation, warfare, genocide, enslavement and rebellions. Colonialism can therefore be defined as the conquest and control of other people's land and goods. Modern colonialism cannot be isolated from previous colonial occurrences. It is connected to earlier colonialism as it was influenced by real and imaginary stories of contact through crusades, invasions, wealth and legendary exploits. This resulted in European journeys

to different parts of the world which ushered in both new and different kinds of colonial practices. Moreover, these implementations altered the whole globe in a way that the earlier colonialisms did not (Loomba, 2005).

Industrialisation of military power and mass-killing is one of the most important elements of modernity (Giddens, 1991). The 1648 Treaty of Münster and Treaty of Osnabrück along with the 1659 Treaty of the Pyrenees resulted in the peace of Westphalia. Thus, ending decades of warfare between a number of European powers. This led to the rise of a major European colonial expansion characterised by increased European wealth and devastation in other parts of the world. The European military organisation was sustained by economic and political expansion at the cost of other people and their politics (Kamali, 2009). By 1900 almost every country or region in the world had been subjugated by European colonialism at one time or another (Loomba, 2005). By the 1930s Europe held a grand total of 84.6 per cent of the earth as colonies, protectorates, dependencies, dominions and commonwealths (Loomba, 2005; Saïd, 1993). The distinguishing feature of the modern European empires is that they are systematic enterprises and constantly re-established. Modern colonialism did more than merely extract tribute, goods and wealth from the subdued countries.

Colonialism restricted European colonial economies by drawing them into a complex and dominant-subordinate relationship as there was a flow of human and natural resources between colonised and colonial countries. In whichever direction human beings and materials travelled, the profits always flowed back to the colonisers' mother land. These flows of humans and profits along with settlements resulted in enormous global shifts of populations. Both the colonised and colonisers moved; the former as slaves, indentured labourers, domestic servants, travellers and traders and the later as administrators, soldiers, merchants, settlers, travellers, writers, domestic staff, missionaries, teachers and scientists. European colonialism embodied different patterns of domination and only superficial contact with 'the other' societies, which ultimately produced an economic imbalance necessary for the growth of the European capitalism and industry. Without colonial expansion the transition to capitalism could not have taken place (Loomba, 2005). Furthermore, the European colonial powers considered anyone who resisted them as an enemy because it endangered, what they considered to be, their civilised nation state. Mass killings and warfare was both the means and consequences of the European capitalist expansion. Therefore, the already existing racism legitimised colonial exploitation and the abuse of human

beings. The European imperialist expansion was especially disastrous to the people of Oceania, Africa and Asia.

Wars, civil wars and racism are all considered to be a part of modernity, consequently leading to inferiorisation and marginalisation of non-Western people, also deemed as the 'others'. Colonialism and imperialism have heavily influenced much of the literature regarding the inferiorisation of the 'others'. War has acted as an integrated and essential part of European modernisation and evolution (Kamali, 2009). Colonialism and imperialism are often used interchangeably, although they have different meanings. Saïd (1993) describes imperialism as the practice, the theory and the attitudes of a supremacy metropolitan centre ruling a distant territory while colonialism is only one form of the ideology of imperialism, which specifically concerns the settlement of one group of people in a new location. Loomba (2005) defines imperialism as the process which leads to domination and control. What occurs in the colonies as a consequence of imperial domination can be defined as colonialism.

The evolution of postcolonialism within literary and cultural studies has been significantly influenced by theories of colonial discourses. Postcolonial discourse is the result of multiple authors' work such as Césaire, Fanon, Saïd, Ashcroft, Spivak and Bhabha. Their work examines proceedings of representations that are used as fundamental weapons of colonial power to keep colonised people submissive to colonial rule. This critical concept seeks to explain the development, conditions and consequences of the experience of modern colonialism (Loomba, 2005; Sawant, 2012). It can be described as rather heterogeneously complex since the contributive authors have different visions and understandings (Young, 2012). The prefix 'post' literally indicates posterity and refers to an event occurring after another. This could easily lead to the assumption and misunderstanding that postcolonialism is the period following colonialism in terms of finite historical periods. However, in postcolonial theory the term 'post' indicates a continuous critical process to help recognise structures of unequal power. Even though many countries were decolonised, the colonisers continued to benefit from them. Postcolonialism suggests that the presence, legacies and hierarchies of the colonial juncture still endure in the modern world in different patterns. The postcolonial approach attempts to focus on factors concerning political, economic, social, cultural and psychological oppression (Loomba, 2005). Therefore, this framework is useful when elucidating the relation between URM and the society they reside in.

Jonsson & Willén (2016) argue that Sweden has portrayed itself as a neutral actor in international affairs, by having enjoyed peace for 200 years, displaying moral superiority, a strong programme for international development and aid as well as high levels of social and gender equality and social cohesion. It is not equally recognised that Sweden was entwined in a number of colonial histories. Even though Sweden was not a colonial power as the likes of France or Britain, the nation has profited from Western political and economic domination. Furthermore, the authors stress that the image of Sweden is a case of Nordic altruism and exceptionalism, which is founded on an almost complete denial of how Sweden throughout modernity participated and benefited from the colonial system. This contributes to the contemporary social and cultural exclusion of minorities.

Globalisation, postcolonialism and social work

Increasing globalisation has made a significant impact on the world and changed the structural and institutional conditions of lives of all people in different ways. It is an integrative force that increases freedom and accessibility simultaneously as it is a colonising force that continues to marginalise the most vulnerable people for the benefit and economic wealth of the privileged (Miller-McLemore, 2011). It provokes class divisions and deepens poverty but it also provides the possibility for new schemes of unified action and politics (Hyslop, 1999). Globalisation is best considered to be an ambiguous phenomenon with both constructive and destructive components that works at international levels with local and interpersonal consequences (Miller-McLemore, 2011). Globalisation is a consequence of the capitalist 'world system' (Wallerstein, 2000a), which has created the grounds for globalisation of neoliberalism and destruction of societies' and local communities' structures and institutional arrangements. Such a process has meant the pursuit for consuming products and the expansion of Western capital and control in other parts of the world (Wallerstein, 2000a, 2000b). An inevitable fact when viewing the world is the immensely unequal distribution of assets, wealth and prospects. A relatively small number of people have a predominant share of the world's prosperities and resources while the vast majority are living in insecurity, poverty and misery (Kamali, 2009; Krishna, 2009). A new global labour market developed between the mid-1970s and the outbreak of the global financial crisis in 2008. It was based on neoliberal ideas with principles concerning open borders, free markets, a small state and deregulation. Neoliberal globalisation advocates stressed that such principles would lead to a more rapidly economic growth in poor countries and

convergence with richer countries. However, in reality the opposite has occurred (Robinson & Barrera, 2012; Schierup et al., 2015). The more privileged people are to a greater extent concentrated in an area of the world referred to as the 'West', which includes Western Europe, North America, Australia, New Zealand and Japan. The unprivileged, or 'the rest', are distributed across the continents of Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Pacific Islands, and parts of Eastern Europe and the Middle East. Binary categorisations such as 'West and the rest' are concepts which shape the perception of a postcolonial world order (Kamali, 2009; Krishna, 2009). Such categorisations which are based on institutional cultural repertoires, which create publicly available stereotypes, help to make conceptual distinctions between people (Lamont, 1992).

The formal end of colonialism after World War II did not mean the end of colonial privileges of former colonial powers and the end of the problems which were created for many colonised countries and people. The impact of colonialism on the formations of inequalities between different countries and people has been widely recognised (Kamali, 2006b, 2009; Loomba, 2005). One of the most important impacts of colonialism is the creation of the so called 'colonial discourse' by which colonial people are symbolically considered and discursively presented as 'backward', 'lazy', 'uncivilised' and 'non-modern' (Goldberg, 1993; Kamali, 2009; Loomba, 2005; Saïd, 1977).

Postcolonialism illuminates and questions the colonial power structures involving the Western perception of reality and conception of the world, as this assumed truth has been used to legitimise geopolitical injustices. At the centre of this power structure is a long-established notion of 'us' and 'them'. These two categories, constructed in the West to confirm its own self-image, define both each other and each other's positions; 'us' as the superior, colonising subject and 'them' as the subordinate, colonised object (Landström, 2001). Migration movements between nations and continents are influenced by historical-political relationships and economic dependencies deriving from the colonial past. During the colonial era several European countries gained prosperity, capital and persistent international political impact by conducting their dominating power. The colonial structures did not succumb when a former colony gained independence from the colonial power (Collier & Strain, 2014). Even though many countries were decolonised the colonisers continued to benefit from them (Loomba, 2005).

Colonialism created and maintained asymmetries of power, socioeconomic disparities and unequal opportunities of participation for individuals, groups and nations (Collier & Strain, 2014). Postcolonialism

suggests that the presence, legacies and hierarchies of the colonial juncture still endure in the modern world in different patterns (Loomba, 2005). One exponent in a postcolonial Europe is the European asylum and migration policy where the legal system acts as an expression of a colonial relationship between authority and power. Ideologies of domination and subordination effect the way migrants are treated in legal systems, political governing, economic and social practices of the societies they reside in (Collier & Strain, 2014). Although the European powers more or less lost their colonies after World War II the superior attitude towards the 'others' seems to have partially remained. The postcolonial world has not freed itself from racial thinking or ethnic inequalities. A serious consequence of reinforced racial thinking is the racism and discrimination against immigrants, refugees as well as European citizens with immigrant or minority roots (Kamali, 2009). The concept of postcolonialism is particularly relevant to critical social work because unequal power relationships and the construction of 'others' still have an impact on our societies (Eliassi, 2015; Jönsson, 2013; Morley et al., 2014).

Postcolonial theory is an important perspective in social work, both in its national and global practices. In many cases people from the Global South have been presented in the process of knowledge production in Western academic circles as passive victims of stagnant religious and cultural traditions in need of being saved by Western men and women (Chatterjee, 1993; Mohanty, 1991; Spivak, 1995; Syed & Ali, 2011). The Western social work, which has been globalised as part of colonial expansion of Western countries, has played a role in racist, discriminatory and exploitative states. Such functions of social work have been part of the actions of states in criminalising, marginalising and violating the humanity of the 'othered' groups (Blackstock, 2011; Park, 2008; Pollack & Caragata, 2010). Even the established discourses of human rights and development have been used to legitimise paternalistic extensions of the civilising mission of colonialism, reinforcing the narrative of Western saviours to passive colonised and 'Third World' victims (Chowdhury, 2009; Escobar, 1995; Mutua, 2002). Social work should therefore be aware of its colonial and discriminatory past and present in order to avoid the reproduction of discriminatory structures. A postcolonial critical perspective should be applied in research questions and method as well as in analysing the collected material. Avoiding the 'mission of saving' the 'others' and the 'colonised' should be both theoretically and practically challenges (Mohanty, 1991). This requires decolonising theory and practices of social work and considering the agency of the 'others'. In this work I am trying to see the URMs' agency role as active individuals who are moving and fighting

against colonial constructed borders, which is both maintained and challenged by neoliberal globalisation.

Intersectionality and migration

Analysing and explaining the intersection of multiple inequalities is central to social theory in general and in gender studies in particular. Having its roots in the theoretical movement of Black Feminism, feminist analysis has moved beyond the focus on single categories, such as class, gender, ethnicity, disability, age, sexual orientation and religion, and recognised the theoretical importance of the intersection of multiple inequalities (Acker, 2000; Anthias & Yuval-Davis, 1992; Brah & Phoenix, 2004; Crenshaw, 1989; Hooks, 1987; Mirza, 1997; Walby, 2009; Yuval-Davis, 2006). One of the pioneers of intersectionality, Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989) presents the concept of intersectionality to show that the focus on single categories of gender or 'race' limits black women's access to the American labour market and how a lack of understanding of the intersection of 'race' and 'gender' led to the marginalisation of black women and their experiences. An intersectional analysis of power relations by which the focus will be on understanding the ways the intersection of different power systems and categories influence marginalised groups in society, is then necessary in all social scientific research to avoid problems of studying single categories. It will also help to avoid the problems of categorisation and forcing heterogeneous people in homogenous and unchangeable categories. The lack of an intersectional theoretical perspective puts the understanding of multiple power relations and the in-group differences into danger. As Hook (1987) argues, black women have historically been oppressed both by white men and women, as well as by black men. This stress the need for understanding the multiple power structures in society.

At the core of intersectionality is thus the contention that the prime centralisation of one system of inequality, social status, or identity, obscures the ways in which systems of inequality mutually reinforce one another (Crenshaw, 1989; Hankivsky, 2012). Studies that rely on a single approach often contribute to invisibility of other categories of power, so called 'intersectional invisibility' (Purdie-Vaughns & Eibach, 2008), which means that such single approach studies make a person or a group holding multiple disadvantages 'invisible'. For example, reducing girls' identity into categories like women and children causes girls to be neglected in favour of those who are more visible (Taefi, 2009). Social positions are fluid and experienced simultaneously (Virell-Fuentes, Miranda & Abdulrahim, 2012). The

migration experience also varies from circumstance to circumstance, solely regarding gender differences is not enough to understand this complex phenomenon (Abramovich, Cernadas & Morlachetti, 2011; Brah & Phoenix, 2004). Rooted in Black Feminism and Critical Race Theory, intersectionality is a method and a disposition, a heuristic and analytic tool. Intersectionality is a theoretical perspective which highlights the ways in which multiple systems of inequality work with and through one another, at multiple levels of society (Collins, 2000; Zinn & Dill, 1996).

Studying migration must therefore be sensitive to the question of differences based on class, gender, religion, age and other categorisations and the intersection of those categories. In a capitalist and colonial world, people's ethnic background constitutes the transversal dividing line that cuts across multiple power relations such as class, sexuality and gender relations on a global scale. This is what has become known as the 'coloniality of power' (Quijano, 2000). 'Colonial immigrants' are those migrants coming from peripheral locations in relation to European or Western countries, who at the time of arrival are 'racialised' in similar ways to the 'colonial subjects' of receiving countries.

The change in the position of women in many Western countries, which meant moving away from the traditional role as housewives and increasingly take place in the established labour markets, creates a new labour market for women from less privileged countries. Such a change has led to increasing immigration of women to, for instance, Europe. This is addressed by some scholars as 'feminization of migration' (Labadie-Jackson, 2008). However, feminisation of immigration to Europe is more related to the legal immigration of adults. In the case of the so called 'illegal' adults and URM's males are overrepresented. Statistics reveals that the majority of URM's who arrive in the EU are males between the ages of 13-17, the largest group of asylum applicants belongs to the age group 16-17 (Ayotte, 2000; EMN, 2010; SMB, 2015). Ayotte (2000) identified three possible reasons why males are the overwhelming majority; they are at bigger risk in conflict situations, parents value sons more than daughters in certain cultures, especially the oldest one, moreover it is also considered less dangerous for young males to travel alone.

Such a phenomenon cannot be properly analysed without using an intersectional theoretical approach. The concept of intersectionality can be used to explore how class and gender differences interplay and affect the migration of URM's within postcolonial European societies. Hankivsky (2014) claims an intersectional approach is necessary because it can link individual experiences to broader structures and systems, which is crucial for revealing

how power relations are constituted and experienced. The term intersectionality was first introduced by critical 'race' theorist Crenshaw in 1989 and her work is considered particularly significant in developing the field (Walby, Armstrong & Strid, 2012; Yuval-Davis, 2006). Interest arose when black feminist scholars produced a critique of gender-based and race/ethnicity-based research due to the invisibility of black women at such intersections, thus failing to recognise power hierarchies, conflicts of interest and divisions among women (Lykke, 2009; McCall, 2005; Walby, Armstrong & Strid, 2012). There was also a critique of identity politics, because of its over-stabilisation of discrete groups and categories (Walby, Armstrong & Strid, 2012). Further contributions by anti-racist feminist theorists has shed light on the processes of racialisation and class and how the intersections involved produces specific forms of complex disadvantage (Anthias, 2012).

It must be mentioned, however, that the concept of intersectionality in the way it is normally used, is criticised by scholars, such as Sara Ahmed (2017) and Sirma Bilge (2013). Ahmad and Bradby (2008) argue that homogenisation of people with immigrant backgrounds is rooted in the ideology of 'whiteness' (e.g., Walby, Armstrong & Strid, 2012). This runs the risk of marginalising the importance of ethnicity and 'race' in intersectional analysis (Parker & Hefner, 2015). Such scholars mean that the concept has gone through a 'whitening process' creating a 'messy concept'. Bilge (2013) mean that a set of power relations within contemporary feminist academic debates on intersectionality worked to 'depoliticizing intersectionality' and neutralising the critical potential of intersectionality for social justice-oriented change. She means that despite their claims of inclusiveness, progressive movements can fail in intersectional political awareness, which harms various subordinated groups, who are silenced, excluded, misrepresented, or co-opted. Bilge pleas for a radical intersectional praxis which foster intersectional political awareness, which will create critical potential for building non-oppressive political coalitions between various social justice-oriented movements. This means that we have to use the theoretical perspective of intersectionality cautiously and be aware of the risks of using the concept in a way that reproduces the majority white society's ambition of diversifying 'whiteness' and not considering diversities of oppression among 'otherised' groups. To avoid problems of established ways of using the theoretical approach of intersectionality, I am using such critical perspective of intersectionality in this work.

Neoliberalism, privatisation of the welfare state and social services

Since the 1970s, the neoliberal doctrine of modernisation and development has dramatically changed the trends in global development and forced many nation states to adjust their developmental and socioeconomic programs to the ideology and programs of neoliberalism. The neoliberal policy and parole of making the government cheaper has led to the reorganisation of many countries' welfare states and an uncontrolled privatisation, which have harmed both Western and non-Western countries alike. However, the imperialist hegemony and socioeconomic power of Western countries make such changes much more substantial and harmful in non-Western countries, which even lead to frequent wars and conflicts in those countries (Kamali & Jönsson, 2018a).

However, as mentioned earlier, Western countries have also gone through many neoliberal changes of their socioeconomic organisations and institutions. The retreat of the welfare state and marketisation of their welfare states and social services influence many people in need of social work interventions in those countries. This has led to individualisation of social problems which should be individually 'managed' by a managerial bureaucratic apparatus, rather than by well-informed social workers empowered by critical knowledge. The policies of New Public Managements (NPM) have during the last decades of neoliberalisation been established in those countries' welfare systems and social services instead of targeting the structural properties and mechanisms, which create inequalities and social problems (Kamali & Jönsson, 2018a). This has even influenced the reception system of immigrants in general and of URM in particular. Nordic countries, including Sweden, which traditionally harboured a few of the world's strongest welfare states, has since the 1990s introduced neoliberal reforms of the welfare services aimed at making reception of immigrants cost-effective (Alseth, 2018; Jönsson & Kojan, 2017; Kamali & Jönsson, 2018a). Even other parts of the welfare states, such as working with people in need of social work's interventions have been subjected to neoliberal reorganisation and reforms in order to make the welfare state cheaper. Civil organisations and voluntary activities engaged in the reception of immigrants and in working with people in need of social work's intervention have also been highly influenced by neoliberal changes. Neoliberal practices, such as commodification and marketisation, have paved the way for profound changes and transformations of social work and civil activities (Andersen, 2018). This has led to increasing competition among civil society organisations for receiving funds from public welfare organisations in the name of 'cost-

effectiveness'. However, such neoliberal ambitions have proved to be just an 'ambition' and a parole, which have no potentiality of realisation. On the contrary, many neoliberal reforms have led to increasing costs of social work intervention and welfare organisations. However, the increasing costs of interventions did not help those in need, but went directly to many new private organisations providing services to the welfare state (Jönsson & Kojan, 2017; Kamali and Jönsson, 2018a).

During the last years and since the sudden increase of the immigration of URM in 2015, many profit-oriented private companies have been raised in a neoliberal private market of the welfare state and social work practices. Such companies have since 2015 and the sudden increase of the URM, established many residential homes and 'family-homes' since this has generated huge amounts of income.

Neoliberalism and social workers' knowledge and skills

The importance of social work knowledge production and dissemination has been emphasised for a long time (e.g., Holden et al., 2009; Lindsey, 1995). Like other social sciences, social work has a long-standing commitment to research, knowledge production and utilisation (Greenwood, 1957; Kadushin, 1959; Kirk and Reid, 2002; Rosen et al., 1999). Almost all research in social work is justified by its relevance for use in social work practice and policy making (Kriesberg & Marsh, 2015). There are many possible uses for research and scholarship in social work, such as to increase understanding of social problems and peoples living conditions, to shift conceptual frame, to reduce uncertainty, to legitimate decisions already made, and to neutralise critics. Empirical studies summarised by Weiss and Bucuvalas (1980) indicate that use of social research is much more likely to be conceptual use, i.e. uses of research findings to shift the way problems are formulated, the range of solutions considered, and the understandings of organisational and professional context in which problems are being solved (Caplan et al., 1975; Weiss & Bucuvalas, 1980).

Neoliberal reorganisation of Swedish society since the 1990s, which has led to increasing socioeconomic gaps in society, makes it almost impossible to not consider the need for new knowledge and skills for social workers in order to work in a neoliberal ideological and organisational environment. The context of neoliberalism and its far-reaching consequences should be of great concern for social workers. Many social work education programmes in Sweden are not adjusted to the new neoliberal conditions of social work and NPM (Herz & Lalander, 2018; Kamali & Jönsson, 2018a; Karlsson, 2018). Although there

are a few educational institutions which are considering the role of neoliberalism in the education of social work, this is still a matter of controversy in Sweden. Many are still living in the dream of a welfare state of its glorious past and cannot accept the new neoliberal context of social work in Sweden, which is rapidly changing the entire organisation of the traditional strong Swedish welfare state as a result of marketisation and commodification of the welfare services (Kamali & Jönsson, 2018a).

In such circumstances, the URM's have to adjust themselves to the new conditions of social work and immigration policy. The increasing restrictions on immigration has created a situation in which many immigrants have to adjust their 'migration history' to the requirements of the receiving country of Sweden's immigration and asylum laws and regulations in order to receive residence permit in the country. This can also include the construction of 'migration histories' in order to convince the Swedish Migration Board and authorities of their legitimised need of protection.

Sincerity, honesty and power

The restrictive immigration policies of many European countries, including Sweden, do not leave many options for migrants and asylum seekers who are coming to the country, to be believed as an individual in need of protection because of wars, conflicts, political and religious persecution and other problems. The restrictive position of the Swedish Migration Board and laws force many immigrants in general and the URM's in particular to adjust their 'migration histories' to the immigration authorities' 'official requirements' in order to receive residential permit in the country. The adjustment of 'migration histories' forces in some cases migrants to 'lie'; necessary lies to meet the institutional and legal requirements of the country. This has created a climate of public hypocrisy, initiated often by racist and xenophobic parties and groups in which the discourse of 'lying or not lying' has been an important part of the debate on the increasing migration of URM's to Sweden.

Telling the truth and being sincere have been discussed among philosophers and social scientists since antiquity. The simple form of Aristotle's theory of truth has been sometimes called the correspondence theory of truth. He meant that there are underlying things (pragmata or facts) that make statements true or not true. Leaving the religious problem of truth and sincerity, philosophers of the Enlightenment tried to find the 'objective' ground by which to capture the essence of the objective truth. However, such scientific activities engaged even many biases, such as the development of scientific racism and categorisation of biological and socio-cultural

hierarchies based on so called 'races' (Eze, 1997). As Hannah Arendt argued, 'truth gets lost in the Enlightenment' (Arendt, 2007), since the truths of the Enlightenment have been biased by inequalities and racism. Truth can be then related to its structural and institutional contexts too and not only be reduced to the binary relations of truth and fallacy.

Others, like Habermas (1990), sees truth or error to be a part of human communication and not as 'thing in itself'. Habermas' claim of being sincere and truthful is mainly based on a communication between two equal partners. He sees inequalities in power relations as a 'distortion' of 'communicative action' between individuals. Communications are power-laden and the dimensions of power and inequality in discursive communications in situations where communicators have different power positions are clearly visible, in both the wider social and political structures and in the immediate situation, and these can be explicitly related to the linguistic choices of the participants involved (Harris, 1995). Therefore, it can be said that every discursive human communication is context-sensitive. This means that discourses cannot be judged irrespective of the contexts in which they are taking place. The context involves the others who are communicating with us and to be honest and truthful in a communication requires an understanding of how our discursive actions do fit or do not fit within rules and expectations of those engaged in communication with us.

Telling the truth or being sincere is thus a part of social relationships which take place in different institutional, socio-political and cultural contexts and cannot be isolated from its complex contextual properties. Research shows that an average person lies one or two times per day (DePaulo et al., 1996; Sadock & Sadock, 2000), and that not telling the truth of something has different reasons. Therefore, lying is not as dramatic as it often is presented by many in the everyday life. Lying is a frequent behavioural pattern, which largely has a clear purpose, namely to make adequate gain, to obtain different types of benefits, to avoid punishment, to protect others from the truth, etc. It is also a complex cognitive activity with important legal, moral and social implications (Karim et al., 2010). Lies are often negatively addressed since it is believed that lies make social relationships difficult. However, there are lies which are acceptable. With respect to the acceptance of a lying, lies can be divided into two categories:

Most acceptable lies: are told to protect others from shame (other-oriented lies); aimed primarily at bringing benefits to another person.

Least acceptable lies: are ones told for personal benefit while harming others at the same time (egoistic lies); to protect or promote the liar's interests.

One can imagine that if somebody lies in order to protect another person from getting harmed, or help her gain a better living situation, it can be more acceptable in comparison with lying for one's own benefit, which often harms other people. Given the fact that lying is context- and power-laden one should consider sincerity's socio-political context. When a person in a community harmed by ethnic conflicts, let say in Rwanda, former Yugoslavia, during World War II and the persecution of Jews, or in occupied Palestine, hides a person whose life is in danger, and answers to the persecutors that he or she knows nothing about that person, is in other words a 'lie' to protect a person from getting harmed. The 'evaluation' of a lie should therefore be placed in its context and not be merely a question of sincerity and error. Despite such realities, there are studies which deal with 'lies' as an individual 'pathological' property (Dike, 2008). Other studies have found a gender effect in lying and mean that men exhibit greater acceptance of moral transgressions or lying (e.g., Banerjee et al., 2010). Such studies exclude important human properties, such as class, age, religion, ethnic and political persecution in discussing and doing research on sincerity and lying. Previous studies show, for instance, that age is negatively correlated with acceptance of lying (Ning & Crossman, 2007). This means that getting old makes a person less willing to lie, and, young people are more willing to lie. Studies even show that religiosity is negatively associated with acceptance of lying (Oliveira & Levine, 2008). However, such studies should be more qualified with the intersection of properties, such as class, gender and age, in certain socio-political contexts.

Doing research on or discussing 'lies' as an isolated phenomenon will not help to generate adequate knowledge about the reasons behind being sincere or not sincere in human relations. One example of this which makes parts of this work is about the role of sincerity and 'lies' in migration of URMs to Europe and Sweden. The debate on URMs' reasons for migrating to Sweden has been highly infected by xenophobic propaganda and the accusations of lying. Such debates resulted in policy change and the establishment of many restrictions and control of URMs in order to confirm their 'real ages'. Such xenophobic debates are biased and focused on the 'others', the URMs in this case, and on whether or not the URMs coming to Sweden are sincere in their reasons for migrating to Sweden. What is lacking in such debates and previous studies is the role of the restrictive immigration policies in Europe

and in Sweden, which force people in need of protection to adjust themselves and their personal histories to the new conditions.

The role of Western countries in creating wars and reinforcing ethnic and religious conflicts in many non-Western countries, which forces people to leave their countries and emigrate to Europe and other Western countries is almost totally ignored in the debate on immigration (Kamali, 2015; Kamali & Jönsson, 2018a). This means that political debates and xenophobic propaganda about the reasons why immigration has increased should be critically examined. The increasing immigration to Europe is hardly a question of 'individual choices' but rather a matter of survival for many people who are forced to leave everything behind and seek better living conditions. At the same time, recent electoral success of many racist and populist parties in European countries, including in Sweden, has resulted in a more restrictive immigration policy, which in many cases makes it very difficult for many immigrants to receive asylum status and residential permit in the country. This may be a reason which force an individual in need of protection to try to reconstruct her identity in order to receive protection in Sweden.

Social integration and xenophobic politics

As previously mentioned in Chapter 1, Sweden has been a country of migration during the course of its history (Svanberg & Tydén, 1998). Increasing immigration from societies undergoing rapid structural changes has increased plurality and diversity of Swedish society. All contemporary societies are now 'culturally plural' as no society is made up of people having one set of norms and values, one language nor a single unified identity (Sam & Berry, 2006). The post-World War II increasing immigration to Sweden has led to growing political interest for integration of new immigrant groups in society (Kamali, 2004).

The concept of integration is open to a number of definitions, which undertake substantial variations between different disciplines and contexts. In the broadest sense, integration means the process by which people who are relatively new to a country become part of society (Rudiger & Spencer, 2003). It is a question of membership, citizenship and belonging to a society other than the immigrants' accustomed social milieu (Kamali, 2004). Moreover, integration can be seen as signifying 'bringing immigrants' rights and obligations, as well as access to services and means of civic participation under conditions of equal opportunities (Pentikäinen, 2008). Social integration refers to the quantity and quality of social connections and

interactions that people have with others. In the context of immigration, the term integration is often used to refer to a type of acculturation strategy in which immigrants have regular contact with host nationals and maintain their original accustomed identity. This strategy can be distinguished from opposite schemes in which immigrants reject their original norms and values (assimilation) or do not have regular contact with host nationals due to segregation and marginalisation (Rubin, Watt & Ramelli, 2012). The quality and location of housing can serve as a sign of immigrants' exclusion from the mainstream population (Entzinger & Biezeveld, 2003).

Since the 1970s, questions, politics and policies of integration have solely been associated with immigrants and how immigrants can become integrated into Swedish society (Kamali, 2006a). The initial objective of immigration policies was assimilation but in 1975 multiculturalism became an important element in the Swedish model of welfare-state politics. This new type of policy was formulated in a proposition from the Social Democratic government and later voted through in the parliament (Kivisto & Wahlbeck, 2013; Ålund & Schierup, 1996). It can be summarised as following:

The immigrant- and minority politics ought to be characterised by an ambition to create equality between immigrants and Swedes. The immigrants and the minorities should be given the opportunity to which extent they want to merge into a Swedish cultural identity or preserve and develop their original identity. The politics should also have the aim of creating co-operation between Swedes and immigrants in order to increase solidarity between them and at the same time provide opportunity to the immigrants and the minorities to take part in decision making that affects them (Proposition 1975:26: 1).

In the 1990s immigrant politics shifted again, this time towards a focus on integration with the aim to support immigrants' socioeconomic inclusion and independence; it was also stated that integration includes the majority population. However, the stance on integration as mutual was not applied in the formulations of integration policies (Hellgren, 2015). Integration should not be a one-sided demand for the adaptation of immigrants to the majority society. Thus, integration is a societal concern and not something that is designed *for* immigrants. Integration affects all individuals as well as society as a whole (Westin, 2001).

The immigration and integration politics from the 1970s and onwards reflect a destructive division between two groups, where the 'Swedish group' is considered integrated and 'the immigrant group' considered disintegrated and in need of numerous means in order to become integrated. Researchers

in the 1990s warned for an integration policy based on migrant status in which migrants were considered as 'aliens' who needed 'special treatment' for becoming a part of the new society. This division in an 'integrated us' and an 'disintegrated them' has led to the 'clientisation' of many immigrants (Kamali, 2004). This means that immigrants were made dependent on different subsidies from the welfare state for their living. Immigrants were not being seen as active individuals who were capable of making their own decisions for finding their ways into Swedish society. Consequently, the political debates ignored the structural and institutional discrimination as a hindrance for integration of immigrants in Swedish society (de los Reyes & Kamali, 2005). The problem of integration of immigrants in the Swedish labour market was reduced to be a matter of language problem and not the existence of a labour market with relatively high level of ethnic discrimination (de los Reyes & Kamali, 2005; Kamali, 2009, 2015; Neergaard, 2006). A relatively substantial body of research show that discrimination and racism are frequent in different institutions of Swedish society, such as in the educational and judicial systems (Diesen et.al, 2005; Gruber, 2007; Hällgren, 2005; Rosvall & Öhrn; Sarnecki, 2006; Sawyer & Kamali, 2006; Tesfahuney, 1999). However, the question of institutional discrimination and racism has systematically been neglected.

Since such means are constructed and authorised by 'Swedes', it inevitably creates an ideal of 'Swedishness' which converts into the ultimate goal of integration (Kamali, 2006a). The concept of integration thus is used as a process of assimilation through which everybody should go through a transformation process of changing their identities, cultures, attitudes and even their religious beliefs (de los Reyes & Kamali, 2005). A governmental inquiry into 'Power, Integration and Structural Discrimination' (de los Reyes & Kamali, 2005) suggested the change of the concept of integration to a more accurate concept of social cohesion and solidarity. In this sense the inquiry suggested, given the globality of human societies, that the host societies should reform their own institutions and structures which discriminate against 'otherised' groups, including immigrant groups.

However, the concept of integration is still used as something that should be reached by 'immigrants' through a process of homogenisation and adjustment to the host society. As Wieviorka (2014) argues, in times of financial and economic crisis, when the awareness of injustice and the rise in social inequality become acute, powerful trends are at work to foster nationalism, cultural homogeneity and an isolationism within countries with demand of integration around shared values. Even the liberal 'multiculturalism' is rejected. When a state has come to consider itself as

representing a stable homogeneous national identity, the cross-border movements of migrants are seen as introducing an anomaly or foreign element into the receiving society (Wimmer & Glick-Schiller, 2002). The ensuing polarisation of population groups, namely 'us' and 'them', indicates a process of social disintegration (Rudiger & Spencer, 2003). It has also been recognised that racialised discrimination affects immigrants' chances to participate in society on equal conditions (Kamali, 2009; Penninx & Garcés Mascareñas, 2014). A significant part of Sweden's modern population is affected from the impacts of colonialism. Rudiger and Spencer (2003) stresses that many migrants, some even after decades of settlement, suffer economic and social disadvantages, are excluded from civic and political participation and face discrimination, racism and xenophobia. Their marginalisation makes them easy targets for scapegoating by far-right parties, which have gained increasing support throughout Europe by exploiting fears and inciting resentment. Furthermore, public attitudes tend to turn against immigrants especially in times when social welfare provisions are scaled back and exclusion emerges as a real threat for many.

Racist, populist, and extreme right-wing parties have established themselves as serious political competitors in Western European politics in the last few decades. They pursue to gather support around some form of national identity, accompanied by xenophobic attitudes, turning against mostly non-Western immigrants, which are often stigmatised as a social burden and a threat to the national identity (Meyer & Rosenberger, 2015). 'Otherisation' of non-Western people has not only influenced individual attitudes about the 'others' but also become an integrated part of structural and institutional agendas within European societies. This has formed a racialised discourse where non-European people are referred to as criminal and anti-Western (Kamali, 2009). Ideologies of domination and subordination affect the way migrants are treated in legal systems, political governing, economic and social practices of the societies they reside in (Collier & Strain, 2014). Migration is framed as a danger to European cultural homogeneity, modernity and welfare. People with 'Western background' are often presented as culturally essentially different from immigrants and their 'alien cultures'. This has been criticised by some scholars as a way essentialising 'cultural differences' between 'Westerners' and 'non-Westerners' and treat them differently within social work (Elisassi, 2015; Kamali, 2002). The notion of 'cultural differences' is frequently used in order to 'rationalise' many problems of integration and find a 'clarification' (Baianstovu, 2017; Eliassi, 2015; Gruber, 2016; Jönsson, 2013; Kamali, 2002; Kamali & Jönsson, 2018a;

Lalander & Raoof, 2016:). Such an understanding of culture is called by Baumann (1999) as 'essentialist' and by Hann (2002) 'totalitarian' which means that the culture to which one is claimed to belong to constructs one's 'essence' and patterns of behaviours. In many cases the concept of culture is used in singular form and is based on simple generalisations of a group's or a nation's behaviours (Tomlinson, 1999). Gilroy (1992: 3) means that culture should not be considered as an essential property of an ethnic group, but as 'a mediating space between agents and structures in which their reciprocal dependency is created and secured'. Culture is in many cases used as a mean of creating an imagined community, a nation (Anderson, 1983). In the public debate right-wing parties describe immigrants from former colonies as invaders with essentially different cultures who endanger the European security and abuse its welfare system (Kamali, 2009).

Immigration has helped drive the development of Western countries, it is a powerful force with the potential to benefit the stayers and the receivers. However, immigration provokes difficulties that cut across party lines and disrupt old coalitions, requiring governments to constantly adjust established policies and invent new ones. Involving immigrants themselves is essential to designing any successful strategy, but their incorporation into political decision making is itself one of the problems to be solved (Hochschild & Mollenkopf, 2009). Westin (2001) argues that a social, political and economic integrated state may only arise when a society appreciates and respects social diversity. Combating ethnic discrimination and subordination is fundamental both for a more successful integration process and for Sweden as a democracy and welfare state (Kamali, 2006a; Södergran, 2000).

The existing problems of integration and structural discrimination in Sweden can be an obstacle to new immigrant groups, including URMs. This should be considered when analysing the social policies of integration and URMs' ambitions for integration into Swedish society.

Critical social work in a time of increasing migration

Social work has a double-edged history. It has been a part of the socio-political projects of colonial powers in their settlements, such as Canada and Australia (Czyzewski & Tester, 2014; Dominelli, 2018), on the one side, and, it has been engaged in social movements and activities against inequalities, injustices, racism and apartheid (Healy, 2005; Sewpaul 2016), on the other.

Critical social work identifies socioeconomic and political aspects of dominations and has been developed from different traditions in social work, such as 'Marxist social work; radical social work; structural social work;

feminist social work; anti-racist social work; and anti-oppressive and anti-discriminatory social work' (Healy, 2005: 173). Critical social work is 'a progressive view of social work that questions and challenges the harmful divisions, unequal power relations, injustices and social disadvantages that characterise our society, and seeks to create more socially just societal arrangements' (Morley, Ablett & Macfarlane, 2019: 1). Karen Healy, (2001: 2) defines critical social as:

- a recognition that large scale social processes, particularly those associated with class, race, and gender, contribute fundamentally to the personal and social issues social workers encounter in their practice;
- the adoption of a self-reflexive and critical stance to the often contradictory effects of social work practice and social policies;
- a commitment to co-participatory rather than authoritarian practice relations. This involves workers and service users, as well as academic, practitioners and service users as co-participants engaged with, but still distinct from, one another;
- working with and for oppressed populations to achieve social transformation.

Critical social work encompasses theoretical perspectives and approaches which challenge the current practices (Jönsson, 2018; Lauri, 2018). Critical social work is influenced by theoretical perspectives informing contemporary policy and practice contexts, principles of ethical social work practice and application of lessons learned from the history of the development of social work as a profession (Webb, 2019). The term 'critical' means questioning our current societies' injustices and harmful categorisations of people, it also means having a view of fighting against and overcoming injustices. Adopting a critical position in social work includes challenging, the power of those, who may benefit from existing divisions of power, and resist attempts for change (Kamali & Jönsson, 2018b; Pease, 2013). Being critical means adopting a position of self-questioning which is referred to as *critical reflection* (Morley, Ablett & Mcfarlane, 2019). By having a critical approach to social work, 'we are putting forward a form of social work that is aligned with the people with whom we claim to work – those who experience *social or socioeconomic disadvantage*, those who are *marginalised* and those who experience *oppression*' (Morley, Ablett & Mcfarlane, 2019: 3). Thus, we assume that social workers have a responsibility to engage in the complex work of imagining and

building a better social world. In this respect, social justice is an inseparable part of all practices of social work.

The concept of social justice has continuously been used differently, as it depends on various social contexts, political ideologies and theoretical perspectives of the actors or groups involved (Miller, 1976). Fraser (2007) views social justice as requiring social arrangements that make it possible for all to participate in social life on an equal basis. Fraser means that in the age of globalisation, we cannot take the territoriality of the state for granted since we are all influenced by international organs and global forces (Fraser, 2009). This has changed the very basis of social work even at national and local levels. The International Federation of Social Workers and the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IFSW & IASSW, 2014), defines social justice in the five following themes:

- Challenging negative discrimination: Social workers have a responsibility to challenge negative discrimination on the basis of characteristics such as ability, age, culture, gender or sex, marital status, socioeconomic status, political opinions, skin colour, 'racial' or other physical characteristics, sexual orientation, or spiritual beliefs.
- Recognising diversity: Social workers should recognise and respect the ethnic and cultural diversity of the societies in which they practice, taking account of individual, family, group and community differences.
- Distributing resources equitably: Social workers should ensure that resources at their disposal are distributed fairly, according to need.
- Challenging unjust policies and practices: Social workers have a duty to bring to the attention of their employers, policymakers, politicians and the general public situations where resources are inadequate or where the distribution of resources, policies and practices are oppressive, unfair or harmful.
- Working in solidarity: Social workers have an obligation to challenge social conditions that contribute to social exclusion, stigmatisation or subjugation, and to work towards an inclusive society.

A social justice framework in social work is especially relevant in a time of increasing immigration and neoliberal reorganisation of national welfare states, which create new conceptual, ethical and practical challenges for the practices of social work (Jönsson & Kojan, 2017). This includes social work with and meeting the needs of URM. This means that the complex issues

related to immigrant children, including the children of undocumented families and URMs, require more flexible, right-based and anti-discriminatory practice skills (Skivenes et al., 2015).

As suggested by the critical social theoretical approaches of this thesis, social work should consider global forces behind structural transformations, which lead to forced migration and the growing numbers of URMs among new immigrants. As suggested by Kamali (2015), there is a need for social work to focus on social justice from a critical and global perspective and develop knowledge about global crisis, wars and conflicts. This necessary change generates some moral imperatives, such as recognising 'the role of colonialism and imperialism for the persistence of new global problems' (Kamali, 2015: 147). He means that such a positioning obliges social workers to obtain knowledge about and respond to the mechanisms and consequences of global crisis, wars and conflicts, and 'not consider itself to be a neutral profession working with people in need without considering and working against the mechanisms which generate war, socioeconomic inequalities, oppression and injustices' (Kamali, 2015: 161). In this respect, social work has to be considered as *a critical and global profession*. This orientation, calls for a new emphasis on the global and political context of social problems (Ferguson, Ioakimidis & Lavalette, 2018; Kamali, 2015). Economic crisis, welfare restructuring, climate change, forced migration and refugee rights are among some of the most pressing issues facing the social work profession globally. Neoliberal globalisation has created global social problems, destruction of local communities, forced migration and damages health and wellbeing of many people around the globe. The contemporary world's refugees and migrants are produced in proxy wars that Western countries wages politically and through the supply of armaments. In order to generate profit for itself, Western countries co-operates with a number of authoritarian regimes and military formations in different parts of the world. Such policies and interventions cause growing instability, wars, conflicts and, subsequently, more people on the move (Kamali, 2015; Zaviršek & Rajgelj, 2018).

Migration has moved into the core areas of social work practices in many countries since the numbers of immigrants and refugees has dramatically increased during the last decades. Social workers engaged with welfare of individuals, families and groups are facing the growing problems of immigrants in many neoliberalised Western countries witnessing the retreat of their welfare states. Migrants subjected to discrimination, marginalisation, xenophobia, human rights violations and inequities need social work intervention. The growth of racist political parties and groups that promote

economic and political nationalism, xenophobia, and racism with particularly hostility directed towards migrants and refugees, necessitates new knowledge and skills in working with people with immigrant backgrounds. These issues occupy a central position in social work – as stated in the global definition of the social work profession: ‘Principles of social justice, human rights, collective responsibility and respect for diversities are central to social work’ (IFSW & IASSW, 2014).

The issues of child welfare systems and migrant families in Nordic countries, is particularly important in a time of both global transformations and displacement of people but also in relation to the neoliberal reorganisation of the Nordic welfare regimes, generating adverse consequences for the living conditions of vulnerable groups (Kamali & Jönsson, 2018a). During the last years, several studies in social work have examined the function of child welfare systems concerning the needs and rights of the URM in Nordic countries (Djampour, 2018; Kauko & Forsberg, 2018; Lalander & Herz, 2018; Lalander & Raoof, 2016; Lidén & Nyhlén, 2016; Lundberg & Dahlquist, 2016; Seidel & James, 2019; Skivenes et al. 2014; Sundqvist et al., 2015; Thommessen, Corcoran & Todd, 2015). Such studies have been guided by different themes, such as law and policy, organisation, training, representation, narratives of migrants and methods of social work practices. Social work plays a central role in delivering services for URM (Seidel & James, 2019). The situation for URM in Sweden is an important question for child welfare and social work as URM are now more likely than ever to interact with mainstream social services. Social workers have an important role in supporting URM in their new societies and the services should guarantee that the needs of the URM are successfully addressed (Evans, Diebold & Calvo, 2018). It is therefore essential that all social workers, both newly educated social workers and professionals with longer work experience, are prepared for working with URM.

Cournoyer (2016) argues that social work is a lifelong learning profession where one must continuously pursue additional learning and critical thinking. Social workers are ethically obligated to improve their knowledge and skills throughout their professional careers. Thus, in a time of drastic change it is vital for social workers to stay up-to-date, routinely think critically, keep abreast of findings in emerging studies and actively participate in relevant professional activities. They should also struggle against the division of people into ‘Us-and-Them’ categories, which leads to discriminatory actions (Kamali, 2015). Critical social work critiques and confronts the dominant social structures and power relations, which divide society (Webb, 2019). As

Lacroix (2006: 20) puts it, 'The challenge for social workers, who are working with asylum seekers in a social justice framework, is understanding the social structures, processes and practices that have caused oppression while advocating for the rights and opportunities of oppressed groups' (Lacroix, 2006). Having the professional mandate and ability to connect the structural and the personal aspects of social problems, resulting in a global perspective, is regarded as one of the great strengths of social work (Ferguson & Lavalette, 2006). Social workers need to be aware of how underlying assumptions of West-centric perspectives and culturalisation in social work can hinder proactive and inclusive practices (Eliassi, 2017; Jönsson & Kamali, 2018; Nelson, Price & Zubrzycki, 2013; Rugkåsa, Ylvisaker & Eide, 2017), such as culturalisation in social work (Eliassi, 2017; Jönsson, 2013). Professionals run the risk of engaging in oppressive practices if social, political and economic contexts are not taken into account (Fook, 1993; Ife, 2008). Thus, critical social work is a matter of progressive social change and challenging the unjust systemic inequalities which impede human freedom and social justice (Morley, Ablett & Macfarlane, 2019). Such a critical framework needs social work practitioners' understanding of the interaction between the different processes of globalisation, migration, integration and neoliberal 'transformation' of the Swedish welfare state (Kamali, 2015; Kamali & Jönsson, 2018a). Critical social work may assist social workers arriving at a broader understanding of global inequalities and the different patterning of migration in Sweden.

Increasing socioeconomic inequalities and the reinforcement of structural and institutional discrimination against migrants and their marginalisation are addressed in a number of social work studies. However, such studies show that social work practitioners are insufficiently prepared for working with migrant children, including URM (Çelikaksoy & Wadensjö, 2017; Skivenes, et al., 2014; Wimelius et al., 2017). Indeed, practitioners are confronted with complex and intermeshed issues related to URM, requiring not only more skills, but also a more rights-based, anti-racist and anti-discriminatory practice (Eliassi, 2017; Kamali & Jönsson, 2018b). Such studies, however, suggest that these issues are not being meaningfully taught and addressed in professional education curricula across Sweden. Furthermore, many services tend to consider children as vulnerable objects in need of adults' care. In this way the agency and subjectivity of children is manifestly denied. Several studies in the field conclude that there is a need to address child protection as a global issue in which states recognise their responsibilities and duties beyond nationalised frames and practices (Jönsson, 2014a). In this

context and guided by critical social work perspective, this study will provide valuable knowledge about the Swedish welfare state's practices in relation to the reception and integration of the URM.

Chapter 4

Political parties' reactions to increasing immigration

The results presented in this chapter is based on collecting and analysing documentary and auditory material from the Swedish election debate held from August 2014 (one month before the election) until the parliamentary election of 2018. The timeframe of the study covers one of the most drastic periods in Swedish modern history of immigration. The material consists of political articles by party leaders published in newspapers and also programmes aired on national radio and TV in which leaders and representatives of the Swedish parliamentary political parties participated.

Through the process of analysing the collected material on the political debate concerning integration and migration from the election in 2014 until the parliamentary election of 2018, four themes could be developed, namely 'Migration and us', 'From the mission of saving women and children to the mission of saving Sweden', 'The cost of immigration to Sweden' and 'From migration to integration'.

Migration and us

Questions concerning migration and immigration to Sweden was initially not a top priority in the Swedish electoral campaigns of the 2014 general election. However, during the last leg of the election this matter became an increasingly intensified topic in the political media debate. Much due to the former Swedish Prime Minister, Fredrik Reinfeldt's, traditional summer speech where he mentioned an increased financial cost, as a result of migration, and pleaded with the Swedish public to open their hearts and show solidarity with those who seek refuge in Sweden. However, questions concerning integration of immigrants in general, and of Muslim immigrants in particular, were on the political agenda in relation to the increasing popularity of the xenophobic party, Sweden Democrats (SD). This divided political parties into two opposing directions during the election period of 2014. One position was held by SD, which propagated for a dramatic reduction of the number of immigrants and stated that if Sweden must help immigrants, they should do so in their neighbouring countries and not in Sweden.

Most of the refugees are not found in Sweden. They are not found in Europe. They are not even on their way to Europe. They will either remain in their own countries of origin as displaced persons, or reside in neighbouring countries, such as Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey. (Jimmie Åkesson, leader of SD, TV4, September 11, 2014)

The other seven parliamentary parties consisting of the Left Party (VP), the Green Party (MP), the Social Democratic Party (SDP), the Moderate Party (M),

the Centre Party (C), the Liberal People's Party (FP) and the Christian Democrats (KD) believed that the country should remain an open nation for those in need of asylum. Since merely a small amount of the total number of refugees seek asylum in Sweden the nation should offer them a sanctuary, thus allowing them to establish a new life in freedom. This position was mainly related to the 'small numbers' of immigrants coming to Sweden:

Millions of people are fleeing. A small part of them, a few per cent, will arrive in Europe. A few per mille might arrive in Sweden. (Jan Björklund, leader of FP, TV4, September 11, 2014)

The political discourse regarding migration to Sweden was during the election period essentially related to wars and conflicts, which forced refugees to leave their homes and communities. Politicians often mentioned the armed conflicts in Syria and Iraq caused by the Islamic State's advancements. However, the political debates did not provide any further details about the causes of conflicts other than their existence:

Everyone who comes to us indicates a world at war, a world with disintegrating states with the worst migration situation in 70 years. People are fleeing from those who threaten their existence towards a better life in freedom. (Fredrik Reinfeldt, leader of M, SR P1, September 10, 2014)

However, almost one year after the election of 2014, as a result of the increasing migration to Sweden and the increasing popularity of SD, many political parties changed their highly welcoming and positive attitudes towards immigration. Even the Social Democratic Party (SDP), which together with the Greens (MP) built the government, was alarmed by the increasing popularity of SD among their own traditional working-class voters (Aftonbladet, August 21, 2015). The SDP was encouraged to negotiate with other parties (excluding SD) and form a new programme for migration. The increasing migration and xenophobia forced six of eight political parties in the Swedish parliament (excluding SD and Leftist party, VP) to make an agreement called 'agreement on migration' by which the liberal Swedish migration policy was dramatically changed. In October 23, 2015, the agreement was presented to, and decided by, the Swedish parliament.

The Prime Minister, who advocated a humanist asylum policy during the stressed the 'right of everyone to seek asylum in Sweden', changed his position and made the agreement with the other parties to reduce the influx

of immigrants to Sweden. He defended the change in his and his party's policies in an interview with TV4:

Sweden is in a very exceptional position now, a dramatic increase of the number of immigrants, which do not allow us to think about the question of immigration as we used to do before. We have to act and make new political decisions and take responsibility for the country (Stefan Löfven, leader of SDP, TV4, October 23, 2015).

He legitimised his and the SDP's changing position in his interview by continuously referring to 'the new exceptional situation' and 'taking responsibility for the country'. All other parties in the agreement defended their changing position more or less in the same way. There is still no reference to the roots of why people come to Europe in large numbers to seek asylum. All political parties speak about 'war and violence' as reasons behind increasing migration, but they do not speak about the root causes of 'war and violence'.

As mentioned earlier, the roots of many ongoing wars and conflicts can be found in socioeconomic and cultural inequalities, constituted by the colonial and imperialist policies of the Western powers and their global impacts. Wars and conflicts are not an exception, but an integrated part of modernity, which in alignment with political ideologies and ideas necessitates the exercise of violence (Kamali, 2015). Warfare is able to sustain through external assistance such as remittances from abroad to individuals, direct support from the diaspora living abroad, assistance from foreign governments and humanitarian aid (Kaldor, 2012). Many Western countries have been more or less engaged in creating wars in Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria, although they refuse to see their own roles in such disasters but reacts when the consequences of such policies hit them. Many elites have gained advantages from neoliberal policies leading to increased wealth of elites in Western and non-Western countries and caused the retreat of welfare policies, whereas such policies have led to increasing poverty and warfare resulting in deaths, injuries and displacement of millions of people. The main reason behind such wars has been to change existing regimes in Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria to more West-friendly regimes (Kamali, 2015).

All parties in Sweden acknowledge, on numerous occasions, that wars and conflicts are the main reasons for many to leave their countries and enter Europe and Sweden, and that the present 'refugee crisis' is the largest since World War II. However, there is no reference to either the role of the recent decades' global neoliberal reforms for the destruction of many local

communities (Jönsson & Kamali, 2012) nor the powerful Western countries' engagements for regime change in the Middle East (Kamali, 2015).

From the mission of saving women and children to saving Sweden

Regarding the debate on refugees in the election campaign of 2014, seven mainstream parties considered women and children as two particularly vulnerable groups in need of protection. Annie Lööf, the leader of CP framed the increasing immigration to Sweden to be about 'children and women escaping violence and bombings (TV4, September 11, 2014). The horrible acts of the Islamic State (IS) in the civil wars in Syria and Iraq against all people, irrespective of their gender or age, were reduced by many parties to only be a crime against women and children in order to legitimise the mainstream parties' liberal positions towards new immigrants. The leader of the FP, Jan Björklund's, defence of the country's liberal immigration policy is an illustration of almost all mainstream parties' position towards immigration during the election of 2014:

We are receiving horrifying news from the Middle East. Young women are taken as sex slaves, the others are beheaded. Dead children have been found, buried alive. [...] we have to help women and children who escape war and violence (TV4, September 11, 2014).

The 'protection of civilians' as an international issue was reduced to revolve around saving 'innocent and vulnerable' women and children and ignoring civilian adult men who are not assigned any priority (e.g., Carpenter, 2005). Women and children were presented as a homogenous group without internal categorical differences such as class, ethnicity and national belonging. An intersectional perspective and analyse would change such simplifications and disrupt concepts of homogenous categories, such as 'women' and 'children', and instead acknowledge diverse experiences (Brah & Phoenix, 2004). Gendered emphasis on women and children as particularly vulnerable groups has a tendency to disregard vulnerabilities that draft-age civilian males face in warfare, for example the risk of forced recruitment, arbitrary arrest or detention and execution (Carpenter, 2005).

Moreover, the distribution of asylum applicants in the EU reveals that men were more likely than women to seek asylum (Connor, 2016; Eurostat, 2015). The male-to-female ratio was even more salient when considering URM, in 2014 an immense 86 per cent were male asylum seekers (Eurostat, 2015). Reducing girls' identity into categories like women and children causes girls

to be neglected in favour of those who are more visible (Taefi, 2009). Research conducted in the United Kingdom has revealed that certain countries produce more asylum-seeking girls than others, both accompanied and unaccompanied (Bahbah & Finch, 2006). Social positions are fluid and experienced simultaneously (Viruell-Fuentes, Miranda and Abdulrahim, 2012). The migration experience also varies from circumstance to circumstance, solely regarding gender differences is not enough to understand this complex phenomenon (Abramovich, Cernadas and Morlachetti, 2011; Brah and Phoenix, 2004).

However, the seven parliamentary parties' positive attitudes to immigration of 'women and children' changed due to increasing migration. The category of 'women' became gradually excluded from the Swedish mission of saving immigrants and the political debate revolved mainly around 'unaccompanied children'. Given the fact that Sweden received 35.369 URMs during 2015 (SMB, 2016), five of eight political parties (SDP, M, C, FP, KD) changed their positions and began discussing the 'problem of URMs'. The following quotation is an illustration of such changing attitudes and policies:

We have an unsustainable situation concerning the arrival of URMs in Sweden and we believe that, in a time of huge challenges for the country, we need control and orderliness in the system of migration. We even have to make sure that the resources, which should go to a child, goes to a child. We now want the government to take the initiative to gather different actors in order to re-establish the medical examinations of the age of such 'children'. (Johan Forssell, spokesperson for M, SVT, October 30, 2015)

The minister of Migration, Morgan Johansson, who during the summer and autumn of 2015 completely denied that there would be any governmental decision to 'reduce the right of people to seek asylum in Sweden' changed his attitude. In an interview with DN (November 5, 2015) he states that 'Sweden has reached its limits and cannot receive more immigrants' and 'hopes that immigrants who are on their way to Sweden will stay in Germany'. The Prime Minister, Stefan Löfven, together with the leader of the Green party, Åsa Romson, declared in a press conference (November 24, 2015) aired by SVT that:

Swedish laws are going to be adjusted to EU's minimum level with the obvious goal to force more people to seek asylum in other EU countries than Sweden. We aim therefore to adjust the Swedish asylum laws to EU's minimum level. We want

to introduce temporary residence permit instead of permanent residence permit, except for quota refugees. [...] In addition, the government will limit the right to family immigration.

The established parties changed their positions dramatically during a year after the election of 2014, not only based on the increasing immigration to Sweden, but also because of the increasing anti-immigrant sentiments, which helped the xenophobic party, SD, to increase its support among electorates (e.g., Kamali, 2009). Opinion polls showed that the anti-immigrants sentiments increased among Swedes during 2015. A poll presented in August 15, 2015 showed that the electoral support for the xenophobic party, SD, had increased, the party gained more than 20 per cent support among voters. This was an alarming situation, which pushed forward several actions from, and agreement between, mainstream parties in order to gain back their lost support among electorates.

The cost of immigration to Sweden

In early 2014 the Swedish Migration Board published their annual forecast, which reported an estimated number of 57.000-70.000 asylum applications. The volume was later adjusted upward to 75.000-89.000 and with this prognosis followed an increased financial cost (SMB, 2014). The Moderate Party was first to address the new actualities, subsequently conceding that the expected rise would lead to strains on government finances. Although, they emphasise that migration will contribute to disperse long-term financial profits, which will exceed the initial costs:

The world has changed in a crucial way, which requires certain demands on our part. It concerns the reception of refugees, yes, it is going to cost but the virtues are most important. It also involves us acting like a humanitarian superpower. (Carl Bildt, Minister for foreign affairs, M, TV4, August 23, 2014)

This vision was shared by the right-wing Alliance parties (M, FP, C, KD) and the leftist Red-Greens parties (SDP, MP, VP). They continuously referred to Sweden as a humanitarian superpower, a nation, which has supported refugees in need of protection throughout history. They speak of the importance of maintaining such a humanitarian position, which helps the development of Sweden, as the following quotation indicates:

We have saved people escaping war and oppression, in many eras. We have made sure they can enter Sweden, provided them with work and education. They enrich us with their business ideas and innovations. I want Sweden to continue to be an open country. (Annie Lööf, leader of CP, TV4, September 11, 2014)

Positive categorisation can be dangerous since selective stories and presentations tend to overshadow the existence of various forms of racism and discrimination in society (Robinson, 1993). The 'otherisation' of a group can be an unintended consequence of the actions and practices of a majority society in producing itself as the good 'us' (Kamali, 2009). Swedish modern history also reveals the existence of racism and structural 'racial' discrimination, which commenced with the establishment of the 'Swedish State Institute for Racial Biology' in the city of Uppsala during the early 20th century.

SD had a different view regarding the financial aspects of immigration. They argue for a major decrease in immigration because the costs will have a hollowing-out effect on the welfare state. They believed that immigration must be limited in order to protect and improve the welfare of Swedes. They claimed that asylum migration has an adverse effect on pension fundings and that financial priorities should be directed at pensioners with low incomes, not to large influxes of asylum seekers. However, such a position is nothing new, since xenophobic parties throughout Europe used to represent the 'cultural' or immigrant 'other' as a potential enemy who threatens their nation's uniqueness and welfare (Kehrberg, 2014; Yuval-Davis, 1997). Moreover, they portray immigrants as wrongful competitors over scarce resources such as the labour market, housing and welfare state benefits (Rydgren, 2007). When discussing issues with the welfare state, the SD blames such issues on the cost of immigration, rather than criticising class differences among the population and other relevant issues, such as the neoliberal policies which have led to the retreat and weakness of the Swedish welfare state. Xenophobic parties in Western countries present refugees as a burden for wealthy nations without recognising the role of Western countries in the destruction of peoples' living conditions, which is a major cause behind forced migration. It is rather the non-Western countries, which bear the 'burden' of increasing refugee migration as 82.2 per cent out of all refugees reside in non-Western countries (Kamali, 2015).

However, during the period after the election of 2014 until the end of 2015, even the mainstream parties' positive position on the costs of immigration changed. Even though many mainstream parties continued to not focus on the costs of immigration, they were gradually forced to reflect upon its

increasing costs, which during 2015 reached about 130 billion Swedish kronor. The Minister for justice and migration, Morgan Johansson, said that this is unsustainable for the government (Expressen, October 22, 2015) and the Minister for finance, Magdalena Andersson declared that:

We started working with some measures that will reduce the costs of immigration. This will of course influence the public finances, it will take a longer time before we each balance in the government's finances (ibid).

The increasing costs of immigration forced the Swedish government to ask EU for financial support (SVT, November 24, 2015).

From migration to integration

The Alliance and Red-Green parties recognised, during the election of 2014, that migration has contributed to the nation's development financially, globally and culturally. The SD took a more critical stance as they related asylum migration to consequences, such as segregation and residential problems. They categorised immigrants into different groups where asylum migrants were constructed as a threat to the welfare state as opposed to labour migrants. They believed that riots in the suburbs, shootings and other criminal activities were connected to segregation of immigrants, which was often linked by the party to the Swedish liberal asylum policies. Residential segregation was repeatedly used as a reason behind the notion of marginalised people with immigrant roots as different and deviant. Segregation in urban areas of several Western countries is more accurately the result of socioeconomic exclusion and racial discrimination (Kamali, 2015). In postcolonial terms segregation offers evidence that Western countries continue to be influenced by the legacy of colonialism embodied in the politics and policies of structural and institutional discrimination against people with immigrant and minority background (Jackson, 2009; Kamali, 2015; Loomba, 2005). Several metropolitan cities in Europe have such particular areas where people of immigrant background reside. These people tend to be trapped in a multifaceted marginalisation process which prevent them from having access to normal labour opportunities and access to the means of exercising power and influence in society (Kamali, 2006a, 2015).

The SD argued that the 'immigration agreement' between the Alliance and the Green Party before the election of 2014 had resulted in the most extreme and liberal immigration policies in the West. According to them it is more effective to limit and regulate immigration in order to bring order to society

and eliminate segregation. The complex question of segregation was reduced to be an 'immigrant problem'. Such an argument follows a postcolonial understanding of a 'cultural identity of the West' as developed and free from problems, and which is dependent on the exclusion of the non-Western, non-white 'other' (Dervin & Risager, 2014; Mohanty, 2003). In order to counteract the xenophobic and anti-immigration propaganda of the SD, the Swedish Prime Minister (2006-2014), Fredrik Reinfeldt, declared that the ambition for Sweden is to become a melting pot that resembles countries like Canada, the United States, Great Britain and Germany. Although, he admits the recent increase of migration causes some problems:

It is incredible difficult when a great amount of people are fleeing. A lot of people, in a short period of time, are trying to become part of the Swedish society. We already have, approximately, 11.000 - 12.000 with permanent residence status but no housing for them. We must, of course, pursue politics for housing development. (Fredrik Reinfeldt, leader of M, SVT, September 12, 2014)

He added that besides residential and urban expansion, it is important to let new arrivals support themselves, with the key solution being portrayed as learning the Swedish language combined with access to the labour market. However, the labour market in Sweden does not contain equal conditions for immigrants and native Swedes, despite the anti-discriminatory law adopted in 1989 and its reinforcement through legal documents and policy programmes against direct and indirect discrimination (de los Reyes, 2006). Research has revealed extensive discrimination against non-European immigrants as being the main reason behind residential segregation in Sweden. Unemployment, work-related health problems, less chance of obtaining work aligned with their level of education and limited chances of wage-increases and career advancement are sometimes reduced to be the immigrants' own fault. There is a causal relation between discrimination and unemployment among immigrants in Sweden (de los Reyes, 2006; Kamali, 2009; Nergaard, 2006). Such a crucial problem for integration of immigrants in Sweden is not addressed by political parties or is considered as an *ad hoc* problem in an otherwise well-functioning labour market.

However, the major question of the electoral campaign of 2014, which included debate and presentation of political programmes concerning residential segregation, unemployment and marginalisation of immigrants, was gradually changed as a result of increasing immigration and questions related to increasing immigration. Immigration as a matter of political responsibility and ideological confrontations was mainly discussed as a

burden for the country. Given the rapid increase in immigration to Sweden in 2015 all parties became highly concerned about its consequences. Although the question of immigration as a burden for the country was on the agenda even in the 2014 electoral campaign, the question received high priority during the summer and autumn of 2015 from all parties, except the leftist VP, which stressed the human responsibility of Sweden to receive immigrants irrespective of its costs (Aftonbladet, November 20, 2015). All mainstream parties including the governmental parties, SDP and MP, agreed that the new situation requires new politics.

The post-2015 debate and political changes

The increasing immigration in general and the immigration of URM's in particular was one of the main reasons behind the changing political landscape in Sweden. The xenophobic and anti-immigration party, SD, could use the almost chaotic situation created by increasing immigration in 2015 to mobilise anti-immigration sentiments and obtain popular and electoral support. The electoral polls show that the party became the fourth largest party in Sweden in 2016 and 2017. This trend continued and in the most recent election of 2018, SD by an electoral support of 17.53 per cent became the third largest party in Sweden; the Moderate Party became the second largest party with 19.84 per cent of the votes, and the Social Democratic Party became the largest party with 28.26 per cent of the votes (Valmyndigheten, 2018).

The increasing electoral support for SD, which was considered to be a result of the increasing immigration of 2015, also influenced the mainstream parties concern about the anti-immigration sentiments. Many parties began adopting a more restrictive position in the public debate on immigration. One of the first parties to start changing its positive position towards immigration, which was mainly dependent on its former leader, Fredrik Reinfeldt, was the Moderate Party who in spring of 2015 declared that the migration policy of the country must be changed. The new leader of the party, Anna Kinberg Batra (2015-2017), declared a suggestion of change in the system of residential permit for immigrants. The current permanent residential permit for new asylum seekers should be replaced by 'a temporary residential permit, which will be valid for 3 years' (Aftonbladet, May 8, 2015). The change in M's party policy concerning migration initially evoked negative reactions from other parties, including two of their important allies, the FP and C. However, the need for changing the country's immigration policy forced almost all other parties, except VP, to start discussing the need for change and gradually accept the M's suggestion. The need for changing liberal policies of

immigration also influenced the SDP and the Minister for justice and migration, Morgan Johansson, declared in the same period of time that the government is willing to discuss the issue of migration policy with the opposition parties:

My door stays open, it was open from the beginning, almost one year ago when I took the office, in order to discuss the old migration agreement in former government, but there was no interest on behalf of the Alliance parties. I hope that this time they are ready to discuss the question of migration with us because it is a critical issue today both for the EU and for Sweden. [...] there is no European leadership which would reduce the pressure of migration. (SVT, August 30, 2015)

All other parties, including the most liberal party in the question of migration, i.e. the Green Party (MP), except VP, gradually accepted the suggested change by the M and signed a historic agreement in October of 2015 aimed at reducing the number of people seeking asylum in Sweden. The Swedish government went as far as passing a law to temporarily re-introduce border control towards Denmark in order to reduce the number of asylum seekers. The law was passed in the parliament and its validity started on January 4th, 2016, and is still continuing.

The question of integration was almost eliminated from the political agendas of all parties and the most important political issue became the question of effective policies for reducing the number of immigrants to Sweden. There was rarely any debate on the matters of integration unless it was related to the question of security in the country. The terrorist attack in Stockholm on April 7th, 2017, reinforced the restriction policies and almost all mainstream parties agreed to continue the border controls and other security measures on immigration. Control of immigrants from Middle Eastern countries were given priority in order to prevent future terrorist attacks. The police have increased the control of the borders and included airports and harbours (SR, 2018). The government decided on January 1st, 2018, to establish a centre against violent extremism (Center mot våldsbejakande extremism, CVE). The centre (CVE, 2018) declares that:

The Swedish Center for Preventing Violent Extremism (CVE) shall, based primarily on crime policy grounds, strengthen and develop preventive work against violent extremism. The primary aim of the center is to prevent ideologically motivated criminality and terrorism in Sweden. The center is placed under the auspices of Brå, the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention.

The political climate of the country was changed and the political debate on immigration was mainly about how to restrict immigration and prevent facing a 'refugee crisis' such as that of 2015. Although the mainstream parties try to distance themselves from the xenophobic SD, all parties, except VP, changed their liberal positions towards immigration; however, the mainstream parties' legitimisation of the policy change was in some cases different from the SD. The SD propagated for a total stop of immigration to not only Sweden but also to any other European country. They wanted to 'help' immigrants where they are located, i. e. neighbouring countries, and think that Sweden should only accept asylum seekers from its own neighbouring countries (Sweden Democrats, 2018). Other parties stressed the responsibility of other European countries in the reception of immigrants from non-European countries in order to legitimise their new restrictive policies. The legitimisation of such policies is mainly based on 'controlling immigration, bringing order to the country, creating security, defeating terrorism and protecting the welfare of our people' (e.g., Kamali, 2015).

The restrictive immigration and asylum policy changes dramatically reduced the number of asylum seekers in Sweden. Meanwhile the number of asylum seekers were 162.877 individuals in the 'crisis year' of 2015, the numbers of asylum seekers dropped to 28.939 in 2016, to 25.666 in 2017 and to 21.502 in 2018 (SMB, 2019). Notwithstanding the dramatic reduction of asylum-seekers the debate on the number of asylum seekers in general and URM in particular continued even in 2018. According to the head of the Swedish Migration Board (SR,13 October 2018) the number of accepted asylum applications by URM who have arrived in Sweden during 2015 will be about 30 per cent of the total number. This means that about 70 per cent of the URM should leave the country. The Red-Green government has however introduced a new legislation called 'Upper Secondary School Law', it applies for URM arriving in Sweden prior to November 24th, 2015, whose asylum applications have been rejected. According to the new law these URM will be given a chance to stay and work in Sweden if they complete their secondary school studies. The law has caused huge disagreement among oppositional Alliance parties (M, L, C, KD). The opposition to the 'Upper Secondary School Law' shows the sensitivity of the parties towards the increasing anti-immigrant sentiments and the electoral success of the xenophobic and racist party, SD.

However, there has also been civil mobilisations against the hardening discourses and policies of migration in Sweden. Many civil groups and actors have addressed the situation of URM in Sweden. Critical voices and

networks have debated the increasing demand for realising human rights and a fair asylum process as well as the welfare and health services and psychosocial care for URM. Even protests have been organised and carried out by networks among practitioners, social workers and volunteers, such as the organisations of 'Vi står inte ut' (We can't stand it), and 'Ung i Sverige' (Young in Sweden). Many demonstrations have been organised by such networks and groups in different parts of the country. Protests have sprung up across Sweden against forcibly returning URM to Afghanistan. URM, civil actors and organisations have participated in protests against the URM's deportations to Afghanistan and have had for example a 'sit-in' protest meeting.

Summary

Although the question of migration was not initially a central electoral matter for mainstream parties in Sweden, it gradually became an important question, which ultimately led to the growing popular support and electoral success of the xenophobic party, the SD in the election of 2018. Their misleading 'blaming the refugees' attitude have won ground when no other party acknowledged the broader structures in which socioeconomic inequalities, wars and conflicts emerge and destroys many countries' and local communities' infrastructures, which in its turn leads to increasing migration (Kamali, 2015). Instead, immigration is dealt with as a national problem without any substantial analysis of its global roots and causes of migration. During the election of 2014 all political parties showed a paternalistic vision on migration in which Swedish political parties, from leftists to the xenophobic party, the SD, see themselves as savers of vulnerable refugee groups. Migrants and refugees were often presented to be 'women and children' in need of help from 'us' as a part of the established discourse of 'us' and 'them' thinking. There is no single reference to the role of Western countries in the creation of several 'big' and 'small' wars in non-Western countries addressed by research on the causes of increasing immigration to Western countries (e.g., Kamali, 2015). Instead, as a result of increasing immigration to Europe, the national laws have been changed, the Schengen agreement neutralised and border control reinforced. Furthermore, the policies of the war on terror and reinforcing 'Fortress Europe' have led to stricter migration control and violation of immigrants', including URM's, human rights (Human Rights Watch, 2009).

The political debate during the entire period of this study (2014-2018) has lacked any concrete measures to increase social inclusion and combat racial

discrimination in various arenas, predominantly in the labour market. There are many concerns about the unemployment of immigrants in Sweden but no references to the structural and institutional reasons for this are presented by the mainstream parties. In the election of 2014, almost the only reason presented by the parties for the high level of unemployment among people with immigrant backgrounds was 'immigrants' poor language ability in Swedish'. This was contrary to the fact that many immigrants in Sweden are well educated with proper Swedish language skills, but they are still over-represented in unemployment statistics. The political debates ignore the fact that ethnic discrimination is frequent in the labour market and instead present the problem of integration to be a matter of language problem and not the existence of a labour market with relatively high level of ethnic discrimination (de los Reyes, 2006; Kamali, 2006a, 2009, 2015; Neergaard, 2006). Such a debate of the problem of immigrants' unemployment was transformed to be a question of security in the election of 2018. Immigration was considered to be a problem for the country's security and welfare institutions.

Increasing immigration to Sweden neutralised almost all discussions concerning integration of immigrants in Swedish society, instead the immigration issue became a question of cost, security and control. Further restrictions on immigration were legitimised by the increasing costs, which would harm the welfare of Swedes and the social security system. Based on a postcolonial understanding of the world, in which humans are divided into simple categories of 'us' and 'them', the policies of 'otherisation' came to the fore of the political debate during the period of this study. The study also showed that many politically correct declarations, including the declaration of everyone's right to seek asylum, which was a central guiding principal of the traditional Swedish immigration policies, lost their influence in the face of increasing immigration and growing anti-immigrant sentiments and debates. The electoral interests of mainstream political parties often led to the ignorance of the main reasons behind the complexities of global migration and the role of Western countries in the considerable increase of people who are forced to leave their countries because of war, conflicts and environmental catastrophes. These forms of disasters are often caused by a postcolonial world order, which benefits Western countries. The lack of such concerns and debates in the political sphere does not make such political issues less urgent. The role of Western countries in the war of Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan has been downplayed or in many cases totally ignored. People in need of protection from devastating wars and conflicts have been increasingly presented as a 'problem for 'us' and 'our welfare state'. This is happening in

a time where the policies of neoliberalism are destructing the Swedish rather strong welfare state and force many people out of the welfare network of protection. A new study (Kamali & Jönsson, 2018a), in which researchers from four Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden) participated, show that the triumph of neoliberal policies in Nordic countries have led to the retreat of the welfare state and the reduction of tax-income for the welfare institutions. The same study shows that the socioeconomic gap between the richest and the poorest in Sweden has increased by approximately 30 per cent during the last three decades of neoliberalisation of the country. Blaming migration for the shortcomings of welfare resources is therefore misleading. There is still no sign of any political parties addressing the problem of neoliberalism for the public sector in Sweden.

Chapter 5

Confrontation with Swedish asylum laws and the Swedish reception system

Leaving a country and seeking asylum in another country is not a linear process in which everybody follows the same path of action. Many are forced to leave their country of origin and take refuge in neighbouring countries, or safer regions in their own countries, since they have an immediate need of protecting their lives. Only a very limited number of refugees enter European countries, hence it is rather the non-Western countries which bear the 'burden' of immigration (Kamali, 2015). Increasing wars, violence and conflicts, which have led to the growing migration have even influenced European countries' migration policies. Several European countries have made their asylum and migration laws and policies more restrictive in order to keep immigrants out of their societies, although many European countries directly or indirectly have to bear the responsibility for the reasons behind increasing immigration from non-Western countries. This is also due to the increasing racist and anti-immigrant sentiments in European countries and the electoral success of racist and populist parties (RPP) in those countries. Such parties not only directly influenced the migration policy of European countries but also indirectly by forcing mainstream parties to adopt RPPs' programme and anti-immigrant policies in order to not lose their supporter to those parties, which gained popularity (Kamali, 2009).

In 2015, Europe experienced a strong increase of people who had left their own countries in search for a better life, which included a disproportionate high share of young male refugees, with many originating from Syria, Afghanistan, and Iraq (Connor, 2016). During such an extreme migration situation, when hundreds of thousands of asylum-seekers travelled to and through Europe, many countries introduced extraordinary measures in order to either stop immigration to their countries or letting immigrants pass through their borders into other EU countries (Grigonis, 2016; Zolberg et al., 2001).

Since the EU had no common immigration policy the member states took different positions in regards to the reception of immigrants. While countries, such as Germany accepted and provided asylum-seekers refuge in their country (Hall & Lichfield, 2015), other member states chose a protectionist approach aimed to limit the number of asylum-seekers entering their countries and even tried to legitimate their rejection of accepting immigrants in accordance to EU directives by organising referendum on immigration (Grigonis, 2016). Although many European governments took a protectionist position by restricting immigration policies, there were differences between them in the response to the so called 'refugee crisis' of 2015. Countries badly affected by the crisis and with a recent influx of labour migrants were more

likely to respond to mobilised groups lobbying for restrictive policies than those countries weathering the 'crisis' relatively better but suffering from continuing labour shortages (Cerna, 2016). Given the economic boom in Sweden, the country needs a more liberal immigration policy towards the high-skilled and even low-skilled foreign workers. It could be one of the reasons behind the relatively positive attitudes towards liberal immigration in the years prior to 2015.

On the vane of the European 'refugee crisis' both anti-immigration and pro-immigration groups were engaged in 'a Gramscian "war of positions"' by using symbols, policies and ultimately social and material and shifting blame from historical, political-economic structures to the displaced people themselves. The immigrants then became divided into two categories, 'the deserved' and 'the undeserved' (Holmes & Castañeda, 2016).

As discussed in Chapter 4 of this work, Sweden's liberal immigration policy in 2015 encouraged a large number of immigrants, including URMs, entering the EU to travel to Sweden. The mainstream political parties, except the RPP, Sweden Democrats, were generally positive towards immigration. The increasing immigration and the pressure on the Swedish reception system combined with the increasing propaganda by anti-immigrant groups lead by the RPP, Sweden Democrats, lead to the change in the opinion of electorates and the increasing popularity of SD. Mainstream parties started to change their liberal positions and launched many measures, such as border control and ID checks at the Swedish borders, in particular on the border to Denmark, in order to restrict immigration. URMs, who entered Sweden in 2015, had to prove their refugee status for Swedish migration authorities to gain permanent residence permit (PUT).

The analysis of the material presented in this chapter is based on interviews with URMs, carers, municipal social workers, legal guardians and 'staff from family-homes'. The findings are divided into two themes and their underlying categories, namely, (1) 'Sweden as the final destination'; *'Educational opportunities'*, *'Possibilities of family reunion'* and *'Liberal Swedish asylum policy'*, (2) 'Framing asylum status', including the following categories: *'Forced to leave country of origin'*, *'Selective male emigration'*, *'Framing childhood'* and *'Not being in another EU country'*.

Sweden as the final destination

In order to get a more vibrant picture and a better understanding of the URMs' migration journey, we need to understand the key factors behind minors' selection of a destination country. Such a selection among several alternatives

of European countries is based on many factors considered by the minors. Already in the early period of modern migration studies, Ravenstein (1885) wrote about the reasons why people emigrate and their preferences for choosing their destination countries. Fafchamps and Shilpi (2008) have shown that migrants are concerned with their welfare in the destination country relative to that of their birth district. This is true in relation to both internal migration and international migration. Differences in economic opportunities give rise to strong migration incentives, across regions within countries, and across countries (Kennan & Walker, 2009). The fact that the colonial past and the post-colonial present of Europe provided European countries with a higher level of welfare and socioeconomic development make them a desirable destination for millions of people who are forced to leave their countries and districts of origin and move to Europe in search for a better life. Such moves have been intensified due to neoliberalisation of the world, which has led to increasing wars, violence and conflicts in non-Western and former colonial countries (Kamali, 2015).

All URM participants in this study say that the destination of their emigration journeys was Western Europe in general and Germany and Nordic countries in particular. Shirin illustrates this:

My parents said that you should come to Europe, Nordic countries because they have the best reception of immigrants and that you are going to have a better life there. No place else has the opportunities that those countries have. You have to go there, not in Bulgaria, or Romania. Those countries even have problems with their own people, they are not as developed as Nordic or Western European countries.

Such an understanding of the decisive role of the welfare state and socioeconomic opportunities for the choice of the destination country for migration is not limited to URM participants. Earlier research in Sweden for instance has shown that the strong role of the welfare state in Sweden plays an important role for many immigrants to choose Sweden as their destination (Kamali, 2004). Sweden's reputation of being a country with a strong and generous welfare state, which guarantees individuals rights, together with the fact that demands on immigrants for 'doing their best for integration' or 'taking their responsibility for integration' are strong incentives for choosing the country as destination for immigration (ibid).

Some of the interviewees add that the opportunities of protection of children in Nordic countries has also been a reason for them to choose Nordic countries as their destination. They say that they have already heard much

about the generous social politics of those countries and that their aim was to, in whichever way, travel to Nordic countries. Ahmad puts it in this way:

The situation for children, those under 18 years of age, was much better in Sweden, Denmark and Norway, for instance. We have heard about this and even the smuggler had confirmed this. He said that it is just to come to the borders, everything is organised, they will accept you and give you whatever you need for staying and living in those countries. You are not going to be dependent on anybody, it is your right as children to get money, things and whatever you need.

The fact that many URM's are almost illiterate and unaware of the fact that there are differences between Sweden and other European countries, indicates the role of their network, who may already reside in Sweden, prior to the minors' emigration. Previous research has shown not only that migrants' choices of location can be explained by differences in economic opportunities, but also by their network, i.e. they tend to choose a country where other migrants of the same ethnicity or from the same country of origin migrated previously (Davies, Greenwood, & Li, 2001). However, almost all studies stress that the benefits one ethnic group can get from their network, such as providing goods, initial help and job opportunities, is the major reason for new immigrants for migrating to a region or a country. Moreover, research shows that even other facts, such as a strong welfare state, e.g. that of Nordic countries, play an important role in attracting new immigrants to those countries, irrespective of the existence of previous networks of the same ethnic groups (Kamali, 2004). In the case of the URM's participating in this study they utter that 'information about Nordic countries' in general and about Sweden in particular, has been an important factor for their choice of destination.

The majority of the interviewed URM's say that they already, either before starting their journey from Afghanistan or Iran, or in their stay in another EU country, had decided to come to Sweden. Their decision was based on the information that they have received either from their relatives and friends who are living in Sweden or from other refugees and smugglers. Hossein illustrates the information from relatives as the following:

I have some relatives and friends who are in Sweden, they arrived a few years ago, a couple of them came here just a few months before us, I mean me, they said that Sweden is the perfect place for me to come to. Everything is better, everything is ok here and I would not regret it.

Basar indicates the role of other refugees for choosing Sweden as the final destination country. The information about Sweden and other Nordic countries have influenced his decision on coming to Sweden:

During my stay at a refugee camp in Greece I had received information from other refugees that Sweden, Finland and Norway were better countries for us. Those countries had much better politics for immigrants, they were kind and generous, it was easier to get a residence permit.

However, four URMs have said that the choice of Sweden as destination country was accidental and not based on a plan or a rational calculation. Abbas says that:

I had to leave the country of origin where I was living, Iran, Afghanistan, it does not make any difference [...] Sweden was not my original destination, I came here by coincidence, I happened to be here, I have relatives in another country.

Although the uttered role of 'accident' in their choice they mention that 'West Europe' has been their destination. This means that they did not want to emigrate to neighbouring or non-Western countries, but to Western countries which provide better living conditions.

However, during all the other interviews with the URMs it became clear that categories such as free education, family reunion and Swedish generous asylum policy were the main reasons that influenced the URMs' decision about choosing Sweden as the final destination country of their emigration journey.

Educational opportunities

The role of education for getting a job and having better living conditions is well-known for URMs. All participants except for two revealed that access to education was one of the most important factors when deciding upon a final destination. However, it is not only the education itself, but the free access to educational opportunities which attracted many of the minors to Sweden. Many say that they were influenced by their own connections and community networks, who informed them about the advantages within the Swedish education system. They had been told that one does not have to pay a fee in order to participate in school and that you can decide by yourself which profession you want to study for. As Khalid, who received information about the Swedish educational system before leaving Iran, puts it:

The only reason I came to Sweden was to get an education. I want to study, I want to become an engineer, I have ambitions, I want to stand on my own two feet and be able to make my own money and my own life.

The other participants were informed about the educational opportunities existing in Sweden while they were on the move. During the journey they continuously met other refugees, both unaccompanied and accompanied minors as well as adults. All participants said that they always travelled with an entourage so they were never alone, although the entourage would consist of different people when traveling from one place to another. It was common to exchange information about their emigration experiences and knowledge about other places in Europe with better opportunities. Taj, who managed to travel from Greece to Germany, talks about his conversations with other refugees at a German refugee facility:

They informed me that the current situation in Germany was not good and that those who had reached Sweden were more satisfied. They said that you could go to school and get an education there, so I decided to continue to Sweden.

He also ended up meeting people who had been to Sweden and they could confirm that Sweden was a good country to reside and educate yourself in.

Many participants received information about Sweden while traveling through Europe. The story told by Jamal who had been in Paris before coming to Sweden is illustrative. He says that he was living in a park in Paris with other refugees of all ages. He soon met a Persian-speaking woman who volunteered to exclusively help URMs. Every evening she arrived at the park and gathered all the URMs. She brought them to an apartment and offered them some food, a shower and a place to stay for the night. The next morning, she would take them back to the park. Jamal describes how he received advice of her during one of their meetings:

I told her my story, that I wanted to study in Europe but I did not know which country to choose. She told me I could stay here, that it was a good place for studying, but she also said that 'all opportunities are not in France. You will have better opportunities in another country, Sweden, I have relatives there. You will receive help there'.

Jamal's words illuminate that he confided in the woman and sought her advice on where to travel in order to get the best educational opportunities. The woman's perception, that Sweden is a better place than France, when it

comes to education and overall living conditions, was enough to convince him to continue his migration journey. Jamal goes on to reveal that he proceeded to travel to Germany with a friend who had relatives there. While his friend stayed in Germany, he continued to Sweden on his own. Although he would have received support from his friend's relatives in Germany, he was not interested in staying there, mainly because of the lack of the same educational opportunities as in Sweden.

All of the interviewed participants said that their future ambition is to study and to participate in higher levels of education, although most of them did not know which area nor subject to pursue. One participant, Jamal, expressed that he was going to apply for international finance studies at a university. Although stressing the role of education by many URMs, the reality seems far away from their ambitions, as many of them lack basic education. Given the fact that the majority arrived in the destination country, i.e. Sweden, in relatively later years than their native counterparts, they have many difficulties to be successful in their educations. In order to bridge their educational gap in formal education in the receiving country, the URMs entered upper secondary school at substantially older ages than their classmates. As Oppedal, Guribye and Kroger (2017) conclude, the URMs' older ages lead them to prioritise economic considerations in making vocational choices, since the support from the Child Welfare Services is discontinued when they reach the age of maturity. This leads them to choose short vocational paths, which leads to a job so they can make a living.

There are even other problems for many URMs to obtain an education in the early years of their arrival. For example, many express interests in taking their education further but add that it is difficult to focus on education when their family is in danger. They mean that, when they are reunited with their family in Sweden, then it will be easier for them to concentrate on their education and schoolwork. This indicates that although the ambition for coming to Sweden was education, the educational ambitions have become very vague for most participants upon arrival. One reason for this is the surrounding circumstances, such as distress caused by worrying for their family in Afghanistan or Iran, which prevents them from taking part in everyday schooling, thus not advancing in their studies.

As mentioned earlier, the lack of basic educational grounds for being successful in Sweden is also a major problem. Some said that they had some experience of education, but that it was limited to participating in Qur'an schools. All URMs believe that they will receive good educational opportunities in Sweden. As Ahmad puts it:

In Sweden, you can study and become whatever you want such as electricians, engineers, doctors, teachers, everything. School will help you with everything. You receive money and you get to go to school.

However, educational opportunities are not the only reason behind choosing Sweden as the final destination for their emigration. Some said that they are not going to be engaged in educating themselves, but to as soon as possible after receiving their PUT, find a job. As Hossein says:

I was a worker in construction, a very good one. I know everything about construction work, maybe not qualified work, but I know a lot about constructing bathrooms, kitchens, but here they want to force me into schools and education. I really do not want it. Frankly, I do not care. I just want to start working.

The lack of formal educational experiences for many URMIs make their re-entry into the educational system after resettlement, which typically involves catching up with the curriculum of lower grade levels before they enter ordinary education, very difficult and in many cases doomed to failure (i.e., Oppedal, Guribye & Kroger, 2017).

However, the possibilities of free access to education is not the only reason for the URMIs for choosing Sweden as their destination countries.

Possibilities of family reunion

Many URMIs are sent to Europe by their families in hope of a better life for them, as well as an opportunity for their parents and families to also be able to come to Europe and receive better life chances. This is a stressful moment in the URMIs' lives in the host countries. Research shows that lack of support from family or other supportive networks is one of the main problems facing URMIs in the host societies (Andersson 1994; Eide 2000; Harsløff Hjelde, 1999). The function of providing care and support to URMIs by their own families cannot be replaced by implementing government integration policies (Eide, 2000). However, this should not be overemphasised since many URMIs do very well in the host societies and show no deficiencies related to the lack of their parents in receiving countries, and even in the host countries they continue to be a member of their families at home (Engebrigtsen, 2003). Notwithstanding, the possibility of family reunion was another key factor, which influenced some of the participants' decision on selecting Sweden as their final destination. Some URMIs mentioned a combination of access to education and the ability to bring your family to Sweden as their main reasons.

Khalid, who initially said that education was his main reason for selecting Sweden as his final destination, continues to reflect upon his decision:

My neighbour's son back home came to Sweden about 10 years ago. They told us that Sweden is a great country, because you can get an education there and you will also be able to bring your family to Sweden.

According to Khalid, the opportunity to take his family from Iran to Sweden was a main contributing factor for choosing to migrate to Sweden. When Khalid arrived in Sweden, he was placed in a transit facility and even there he was reassured by one of the Persian-speaking staff members that he would quickly be able to bring his family to Sweden. However, in reality this has not been possible in Khalid's case. Jamal and Khalid, the two young adult participants with experience of coming to Sweden as URM, have completed a family reunification application process, but the Swedish Migration Board denied both applications. Thus, Khalid's pre-emigration expectations of being able to bring his family to Sweden without difficulty did not match with reality. However, this did not discourage him from reuniting with his family. He expressed that there is another, more dangerous, way:

My family contacted a smuggler who helped them to reach Turkey. They lived there for two years before continuing to Sweden. In 2015, when all the Syrian people fled, my family were informed about the borders being open so they left Turkey for Greece. My family have been in Sweden for about eight months now and they are awaiting a decision on their asylum application.

Khalid depicts that there was still a desire to reunite with his family in Sweden although the reunification application was rejected. This meant that his family had to make the same hazardous journey through Europe as he did. It also meant that his family had to live as undocumented migrants in Turkey, which puts them in a very vulnerable situation. The main reason for wanting his family to live in Sweden was so that his younger siblings could participate in school and get a high-quality education.

A few of the interviewed URM revealed that they indeed intended to apply for family reunification, while the majority of the URM had lodged an application for family reunification quickly after receiving their PUT. They describe being anxious and concerned while waiting for the Swedish Migration Board to start their application process. As Basar puts it:

I am waiting for the interview with the Migration Board. It is so hard, but there is nothing I can do. It is up to the Swedish government and the Swedish people. Right now, I have dreams about the future but I know nothing about the future, it is not clear for me.

Some of the interviewees admit that they are under pressure from their families in the country of origin to make it possible for them to come to Sweden. As Abdullah says:

My dad keeps asking me if I have sent in the application to the Migration Board. We just have to wait. I am really worried now since I am almost 18, which will make it a lot more difficult to reunite with them in Sweden.

Abdullah's description reveals that he is pressured by his family in Afghanistan to bring them to Sweden. They are expecting him to make all the arrangements with the Swedish Migration Board and are unaware of the lengthy application processes occurring in Sweden. The information received from smugglers, community networks and other refugees on the move have not included any details of the waiting process, consequently the URM and their families are made to believe that a family reunification is handled and organised immediately. Basar even had concerns that his family thought that he was unwilling to bring them to Sweden. All URM who had applied for family reunification found it difficult to explain to the families how the Swedish Migration system works.

Abdullah's statement also shows that he is aware of the fact that the circumstances will change dramatically once an URM becomes an adult. Thus, the opportunity for a successful family reunification in Sweden decreases as soon as he turns 18 years old.

Although there is no consensus in research about the role of family reunion for the well-being of URM, they feel a responsibility to bring their families to Sweden and other European countries. The entire period of waiting to receive PUT in Sweden creates a stressful factor for the URM. They also mean that they have heard that Sweden is the most liberal country in giving PUT to URM, and that is why they choose Sweden as their destination country.

Liberal Swedish asylum policy

Sweden has a long tradition of a liberal immigration policy which goes back to almost a thousand years of immigration to a cold and distant country (Svanberg & Tydén, 1998). Sweden was a country which lacked any border control until 1917, because the nation encouraged immigration of skilled

workers and people as a way of helping developing the country (ibid.). Distancing itself from the two devastating World Wars and other conflicts, the country succeeded to attract skilled and even unskilled workers from other European countries, until the years following the second World War, who helped develop the Swedish strong welfare state (Kamali, 2004). Even politically, the long-term Social Democratic governments applied liberal asylum policies which provided many persecuted people in other countries, and political refugees, a secure place in the country (ibid.). Such a liberal policy continued to form the Swedish asylum routines until the 1990s when a new RPP, Nydemokrati (New Democracy), succeeded to create a new anti-immigrant discourse in the Swedish political sphere (Kamali, 2009). However, notwithstanding increasing anti-immigrant sentiments and demands for more restrictions of immigration, the political system did not react severely to these demands and remained more liberal than other European countries, with some exceptions, such as Germany. The reputation of Sweden as the most liberal country for asylum continues to attract refugees and migrants, as nearly 170.000 asylum seekers arrived in the country during 2015.

Therefore, one of the major reasons behind choosing Sweden as the final destination country has been Swedish liberal asylum policy. Meanwhile many European countries decided not to open their borders for asylum seekers in general and URM in particular. As discussed earlier in this work, Sweden was together with Germany the only countries who kept their liberal asylum policies during the 'refugee crisis of 2015'. Almost all participants mentioned Sweden's liberal asylum policies as a reason for selecting Sweden as their final destination. However, the URM's stories about the way they received their information and knowledge about the Swedish liberal asylum policy varied regarding the sources of such information. All have had relatively good information about Sweden prior to their arrivals into Sweden.

Abdullah says that when his father decided for him to leave Afghanistan for Turkey, he had no information about Sweden. He was just told to leave Afghanistan and reach Europe. However, when he reached Turkey he started hearing about other, better, countries to aim for as a refugee. This was also the first time he ever heard of a place called Sweden, which he expresses in this following segment:

I did not understand whether Sweden was a city or a country. They showed me where Sweden was located on a map. They said that Sweden, Germany and Austria were good countries. I had to choose one of them. Then they said that Sweden is the best country, that I will get a residence permit there. Everyone in Turkey said that they were going to travel to Sweden.

This indicates that although knowing nothing or very little about the circumstances in some European countries, the promise of receiving PUT was a key factor for many refugees when deciding the final destination of their emigration journey. Consultation with others in the same situation in another EU country, or in the country of origin, has been an important factor in obtaining information about different European countries. As Jamal explains:

I spoke with several people who told me about Europe, that you could get a residence permit as well as an education there. I thought Europe was a country and did not know that it contained of several countries, which were very different from each other.

Thus, the information provided from encountering other refugees on the journey plays an important part when it comes to determining which European country to travel to. Abdullah proceeds to talk about acquiring verified information, through communication apps, from URM already residing in Sweden:

I became friends with some URM in Turkey who in their turn had friends located in Sweden, they had been living there for some time. They talked to each other through Skype and Viber. They told me that as soon as you come here, you will get a residence permit.

This shows that the URM already living in Sweden could confirm what the other refugees had told Abdullah. According to their experiences, URM who arrive in Sweden will immediately attain PUT. It became the major contributing factor for him to continue the risky journey all the way to Sweden.

In summary, the Swedish liberal migration policy has been among the most important factors for the URM to choose Sweden as their final destination. Given the fact of the risky and costly migration journey of many URM, a rejection of their application for PUT in the host country will have devastating consequences for them. That is why they have to make a very careful calculation of the possibilities to receive PUT in the country they choose to migrate to. Sweden has been considered the better, or even the best, choice for the majority of the URM.

Framing asylum status

This section explores the interviewed URMs' strategies for framing their need of protection in accordance with international declarations, i.e. the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child and the Geneva Convention, as well as Swedish national laws and routines. It will also include interviews with other participants in this study wherever it concerns the major themes of this sections, i.e. 'Framing asylum status'. This is mainly due to the increasing restriction to asylum laws, which was introduced by Sweden partly because of the countries' membership in the EU and partly because of the increasing anti-immigrant sentiments in the country since the 1990s and the appearance of the RPP in Swedish mainstream politics (Kamali, 2009). There are a number of established law requirements, found within the UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, Swedish legislation and EU regulations, that needs to be fulfilled in order for a person to be granted refugee status. Thus, the strong policies of the protection of children's rights in Sweden continued until 2015 to attract many URMs to Sweden. However, the increasing restrictions on immigration at large have even influenced URMs' possibilities of receiving PUT. That is why the minors have to convince migration authorities of their need of asylum and protection in Sweden. Although, as a reaction to the immigration peak in 2015 the Swedish government introduced border controls and restricted the granting of PUT, family reunification and implemented harsher maintenance requirements for family member immigration (Hodes et al., 2018) which made it much more difficult for refugees and asylum-seekers to reach and stay in Sweden. However, since the protection and welfare provision for all arriving children in Europe is ensured by international and national legal frameworks (Hodes et al., 2018), Sweden as a member state should act in accordance with 'the best interest of the child' and protect the URMs.

In the analysis of the gathered material four following categories were considered: '*Forced to leave country of origin*', '*Selective male emigration*', '*Framing childhood*' and '*Not being in another EU country*'.

Forced to leave country of origin

All of the interviewed URMs in this work are originated in Afghanistan, although not everyone emigrated directly from Afghanistan to Sweden. Afghanistan is a country characterised by civil war under the Soviet invasion in 1979 and the Taliban regime in the mid 1990s, thus it has been an emigration country for several decades (Mehlmann, 2011). The country has lost many of its infrastructures, such as the educational system, a functioning labour

market, and most important of all security for its citizens. The armed conflicts destroyed Afghanistan's physical and service delivery infrastructure, while earthquakes and droughts stressed the community's capacity to cope (Ghani & Lockhart, 2008). Afghanistan now ranks among the riskiest countries for every indicator of child survival. Twenty-five per cent of children between the ages of 5 to 14 are engaged in child labour, 46.3 per cent of girls under the age of 18 are married, 4.7 per cent of children are classified as orphans (though 12 per cent are living in orphanages), and 37.000 children are working on the streets of Kabul alone (UNICEF-CSO, 2012). The situation for Afghan children is not very good either in the neighbouring countries Iran and Pakistan. Iran and Pakistan have received between six and seven million Afghan refugees (UNHCR, 2005). They are often engaged in unqualified work in order to contribute toward the family's economy. Many Afghans and their children move to neighbouring countries in order to find better life chances. Although the move to neighbouring country may provide immediate security to such families and their minors, even children must work hard work in order to make their living. However, since Iran and Pakistan are not classified as dangerous countries for children, many URM's must convince the Swedish migration authorities that they are coming from Afghanistan and that their lives are in danger.

Although each participant in this study has their own unique biography, many of them also share similar experiences in regards to their family composition and upbringing. For instance, the vast majority of the minors were born in a small village in a rural society of Afghanistan and they convey an image of growing up under modest living conditions. The villages lacked proper roads, which resulted in them having to walk for hours in order to reach the nearest town. In addition, all of the male participants reported that they are the oldest son in their respective family and therefore they had to spend most part of their upbringing working in order to contribute to the family income. A clear majority of the participants describe living in a household with multiple family members and other close relatives. In addition, three of the URM's said that their fathers, who were the major source of family income, were deceased. This has made the life even harder for the economic condition of the family, in particular those who lost their fathers when they were very young. In such circumstances when the father is absent, the women is highly vulnerable and have mainly two choices, either to leave their children and go back to their parents or remarry. Jamal puts it:

If you do not have a husband, the woman must go back to live with her parents. My mom did not want to leave me, so she married my dad's friend shortly after his death. My stepdad is like my real dad.

Jamal's words illustrate that in some parts of rural Afghanistan, it is difficult for women to live an independent life as they greatly rely on their husband's earnings. Nearly all minors said that their mothers worked with different type of jobs such as cleaning, sewing and making clothes. However, such jobs as traditionally considering to be women's unpaid responsibility, did not bring enough money to the family's economy. Accordingly, many young boys were forced to compensate the loss of their fathers and start working in their young age. However, the jobs available to the young boys were often connected to their father's traditional unskilled jobs and small businesses in the local bazaars. According to the minors, such jobs were mostly temporary employments within the fields of carpentry, construction and agriculture. Basar offers an example of this:

My dad owned a shop at a bazaar outside of our village, he sold different kinds of food. This made it possible for us to sell our production in the Bazaar. My family worked with agriculture and we could sell some of our crops.

Another participant also mentioned that his family were involved with small-scale agricultural work, although they did not make any monetary profit from such work. Instead, he describes a tradition of exchanging services without the involvement of payment. It usually consisted of assisting a villager with farming, such as herding sheep and harvesting vegetables, and in return the villager would help the family when it was required. However, such exchanges were not enough to meet the family's major needs and they had to borrow money from relatives frequently.

Another important information provided by the URM's is the lack of education for both their parents and themselves. The vast majority of the minors' parents never participated in education and they were unable to read and write, this is portrayed as a common trait among the older generation living in rural areas. Abbas says:

I know that my parents did not attend school during their upbringing, I think it was because of the war in Afghanistan. I do not know anyone in my surrounding who had parents who were educated and not illiterate.

Lack of adequate education meant that their parents resorted to seeking

employment within the unregulated labour market, which primarily consisted of manual work without any requirements for formal qualification or education.

Even though the majority of the participants, i.e. eight, say that they were born Afghanistan, only three of them grew up there. The other five of the participants moved with their families to Iran (4) and Pakistan (1) at an early age. Therefore, they do not have any own memories of what life was like in Afghanistan. Instead, they rely on information given to them by their parents and relatives. However, in order legitimate their 'asylum status' in Sweden, they provide different stories about the 'political problems' that their parents have had in Afghanistan. This is expressed by one of the minors, Khalid, in the following way:

My family had some problems with the Taliban. My dad was supposed to work for the American authorities, but when the Taliban discovered this, they threatened to kill us. I do not remember this happening since I was so young, I do not even remember what Afghanistan looks like.

He describes that his family was unable to live in Afghanistan because of death threats, which ultimately forced them to move to Iran. His father also had problems finding a job and therefore the family struggled financially and had many problems with making their daily bread. The hard life in Iran forced the father to work with different irregular and in some cases illegal activities, such as selling some commodities on the streets and even producing drugs in order to make a living.

Several of the URMs mentioned violence and personal conflict with the Taliban as dominant features of everyday life when growing up in Afghanistan and a major reason for their families' migration to neighbouring countries. Two of the participants said that they never got the chance to know their fathers because they were killed in violent acts in Afghanistan during the late 1990s and early 2000s. Taj's father had actively participated in the war, while Basar's father was robbed and shot to death by an unknown perpetrator when driving to Ghazni. Consequently, the role of Taliban and the war in Afghanistan had made the life unbearable and destroyed all possibilities for them to have a normal life there. This is illustrated by Basar as the following:

People are killed by the Taliban every single day. There is no future and there is no hope, unless you do not have personal problems. For me there was no hope in Afghanistan. We knew that we were going to be killed there.

A couple of minors mention that 'other horrible things' happened to them in Afghanistan that they did not want to share with me. They meant that such things are not easy to bring up again and discuss. Abbas puts it in the following:

I had to leave Afghanistan, there is a secret thing I cannot tell you, but something happened to me and my family in the village. I cannot tell you, you are not going to understand because you have no experience of these things. I brought it up when I was talking to the Migration Board and it should stay there.

All of the participants depict Afghanistan as a country suffering from the consequences of the decades-long armed conflicts. It has severely limited their future opportunities in Afghanistan in terms of education, employment and overall living conditions. One of the consequences of long-term wars and conflicts in Afghanistan has been increasing migration into urban areas, such as Kabul, according to minors. Three of the participants estimate that the shortage of jobs and income force many people of their villages to move to urban areas in general and to Kabul in particular. They also talk about their experiences from temporarily staying in Kabul, which is the largest city in Afghanistan. They mean that people living in the city are more educated, smarter and think more freely compared to those residing in the rural areas. They depict Afghanistan as an unequal country when it comes to access to education and mean that deprivation of education is a major reason why there are so many illiterate people in rural areas. They mean that this is also a reason behind essentialisation of ethnic divides and conflicts (Glatzer, 1998). As one of the minors, Jamal, says, ethnic affiliation is an important feature of discrimination when young people attempt to get access to education:

In Afghanistan there are different groups of people. At school, I never told anyone which ethnic group I belonged to, but the others could tell due to our language differences. So, they began to bully me and beat me. Not just the students but the teachers as well. Eventually I was kicked out of school.

This statement indicates that people sometimes become a target of discrimination based on belonging to minority groups; they are less valued and therefore not given the same opportunities as other nationals. As Chioyenda (2014) puts it, in Afghanistan ethnic Hazaras are a group with a long history of marginalisation, and even outright persecution, mainly because of their Shi'a Muslim faith. Moreover, this points towards the fact that

access to education in Afghanistan is highly determined by factors such as residential area and ethnic background.

One of the most prominent shared experience among the URM participants concerns their childhood, as the majority of them had spent most of their upbringing working which had only allowed them to attend school sporadically. Thus, their childhood in Afghanistan, as well as in Iran, is framed around familial responsibilities and lack of formal education. One minor, Abbas, stated that he had never participated in any kind of education while the others explained that they had merely spent a couple of years going to school with periodic attendance. Abdullah offers some insight in regards to his education in Afghanistan:

I studied the Qur'an, mathematics and I learnt how to read and write in Persian. It is not like a school in Sweden. We went to a mosque with a Mullah.

When the other participants spoke of what kind of education, they had obtained in Afghanistan it became clear that it was similar to what Abdullah mentioned, because they had also visited the mosque with the purpose of studying the Qur'an. Jamal pointed out that long distance and absence of infrastructure had prohibited him and the other youths from accessing school located in the nearest town, as a solution they received their knowledge from one of the adults in their village:

A religious man, who was educated, would gather the young ones and teach us about the Qur'an, the war in Afghanistan and such. I have talked to teachers, and carers, about what I learnt in my country, and now I realise that half of the things we were taught is not true. So, it is like I have to start again.

Burde (2014) also shows the significant role of 'mosque schools' in which religious education and teaching the Qur'an is a major part of education. Sadry (2018) points out that education in Afghanistan can be divided into three different main forms, namely Traditional, Islamic and Modern education. Traditional, also known as informal, education is related to cultural values, skills and moral stories which is passed on from the older Afghan generation to the younger ones. Islamic education is conducted in mosques to teach Islam and the Qur'an to students.

Although some of the minors participated in limited educational training, only two of the minors have partaken in the general, Modern, education system. It is common for people residing in rural societies and small villages to participate in the more religious forms of education in Afghanistan and

Pakistan. In Iran, it has been difficult to have access to education since many lacked the necessary residence permit or had to work in order to support their families. As Abbas puts it:

Living in Iran was difficult. I never had any spare time because I worked during both the day and the evening. In the mornings, I would walk to this large square and just wait for someone to offer me any kind of chore. Every single day I had a different job.

Another URM, Taj, says that:

My mom's new husband did not allow me to go to school. He wanted me to work instead of him. I did construction work, I was taught at the site. It was very rough because I had to work outside no matter what the weather was [...] I worked from 7am to 5pm, when I got home I just rested because I was exhausted.

As mentioned earlier, these accounts refer to how occupation plays an essential part in their everyday life, it is economically beneficial for their family but consequently there is no room for education. Khalid, who moved to Iran at the age of four, provides an additional important aspect as to why Afghan youths are not engaged within the Iranian education system:

I was not allowed to attend school in Iran because me and my family did not have the right documents. You also have to pay a fee in order to attend school in Iran. [...] I started working when I was about nine years old by helping my dad collect plastic waste and similar things to sell. We did not make much money.

His narrative of the situation in Iran reveals that he was living there as an undocumented immigrant, which at the time gave him no right to access education. According to the European Commission there are approximately 2.000.000 undocumented Afghan refugees located within Iran which means that they lack formal legal status and access to basic needs, such as health services, education and legal employment. In May of 2015 a decree was passed by the Supreme Leader which permitted all minors, regardless of their status, in Iran to access formal education, there are however still several obstacles standing in the way for undocumented minors. For instance, they have to pay a fee in order to obtain an enrolment card and the required books, thus not all families can afford to keep their children in school. There is also the economical impediment as some minors are the main provider for their family (ECHO, 2018). As mentioned in the previous section, Jamal's effort to

take part in the general education system in Kabul was unsuccessful due to discrimination related to his ethnic background. Instead of moving back to his village he decided to make a second attempt to access education by accompanying a close relative to Iran. Similar to Khalid, he describes being prohibited from attending school because of the lack of formal legal status and the lack of monetary assets.

Although some families decide to send their children to Europe, the decision is highly based on the opportunities and the families' preferences. Many are sending their oldest male children and youths on the risky emigration adventure to Europe.

Selective male emigration

The dangers facing many minors in their emigration to Europe is a major reason for many families to not send their daughters to Europe. This is due to the fact that many minors have to enter another EU country before reaching their final destination and are depending on smugglers, who are often not to be trusted. Many minors provide stories about girls being sexually abused in the other EU countries and in temporary stays in refugee camps. The story told by Abdullah about the destiny of female URM in Greece is an illustration of this:

My parents let my younger sister stay at home and sent me to Europe, because they were afraid of my sister getting hurt during the journey, it was not safe for her. This was true, because when we were in Greece, waiting for the transit to another European country, there were a few girls among us. The smugglers said first that it was too dangerous for the girls to continue the journey to other European countries. The girls then had to stay in an apartment waiting for more secure ways for their journey. Later we found out what was going on. Smugglers intentionally kept them in Greece for sexual intercourses, abuse them.

Sexual abuse of URM have been observed and explored in several earlier research studies. Wiese and Burhorst (2007) showed in their study that sexual abuse was more frequent among URM (36 per cent) compared to a group of children with families (7 per cent). The study showed also that 67 per cent of the unaccompanied refugee girls and 14 per cent of the boys had experienced sexual abuse. Migrant children in transit through irregular paths of migration face a heightened risk of sexual abuse and exploitation as a result of their 'illegal' status (De Genova, 2002). This is also partly because of the dominant discourses on migration and asylum practices in transit countries. As Digidiki and Bhabha (2018) argue, migrant children in transit countries are trapped

between the international duty to protect them as children, and the strict migration and asylum policies imposed on them as 'illegal' migrants. They conclude that the conflict between discourses allows for the substitution of a migrant child's status as a child by that of an illegal migrant, further reinforcing punitive rather than protective migration and asylum practices. The increasing migration of URM's fleeing wars, conflicts, poverty and seeking refuge in Europe has led to increasing concern for these children's life conditions in general and child sexual exploitation, in particular (UNICEF, 2016, 2017a, 2017b). A growing number of international aid organisations (ECPAT International, 2013; Lanzarote Committee, 2017; Save the Children, 2016; UNHCR, 2012; UNICEF, 2009, 2017a) have also alarmed the growing problem of the sexual abuse of URM's in Europe.

Although several of the male URM's talked about the sexual abuse of female URM's, it should be mentioned that it was not only smugglers, but also other male URM's and adult migrants, who abused female URM's. This was voiced by two of the participating female URM's. Maryam, who herself have been abused by several persons in another EU country, tells the following history:

When I was waiting for the rest of the journey to Sweden, the smuggler said that it is very dangerous for you as a girl to travel together with other boys, they are going to abuse you. He said that I can protect you and if you are with me, nobody dares to disturb you. He had that with me many times and abused me. He was so dirty and sometimes told me that I had to have that with his friends too, it was horrible and I cannot forgive him, them. But the worst thing was that it was not only him and his dirty friends, but also other immigrants and refugees who saw you as a whore and thought that they had the right to do whatever they wanted with you.

She meant that the 'bad reputation' becomes public very soon in small places and communities, which a refugee camp and a 'refugee community' in another EU country is.

Even in Sweden it is much tougher for female URM's in different ways. The close contacts between male and female URM's are considered by some girls to be harmful for their life here. As Shirin puts it:

Here, Afghan boys see you as either their responsibility or their property. As soon as you are with them, they want you to do whatever they wish. You are supposed to sleep with them and if you deny they see you as crazy, mad. If you are with somebody else, it does not need to be a 'love story' or sexual, they condemn you and tell you what is wrong and right. Once I was with an Iranian boy from school

and had a coffee in the city, two of my 'friends', Afghan boys, came to the coffee-shop and was about to have a fight with my Iranian friend.

This is confirmed even by carers who mean that the females are often controlled by male URM. Martin who has experience of working with both male and female URM mean that:

I do not know if this has to do with their culture or if it depends on that they lack education, but the fact is that boys have a tendency to control the girls; the girls want to be free in Sweden and do whatever they want. This is not appreciated by the boys, also the boys do whatever they want and do not think that they need any 'carers' or grownups to watch over them. They see themselves as fully grownup and clever enough to make decisions about their own life.

Such masculine control of women's sexuality and life is often interpreted as a 'cultural' phenomenon, which belongs to 'the others'. A common understanding among carers, legal guardians and municipal social workers was that URM belongs to cultures alien to the Swedish culture. They often culturalise social problems of the minors and are unable to consider the more complex mechanisms behind the role of masculinity in creating an 'imagined community' (Anderson, 1983), i.e. a 'nation'. As Nagel (1998) argues, nationalist politics is a masculinist enterprise not to indict men for dominating national or international arenas in which a nation should be kept pure. In her evocative book, *Bananas, Beaches and Bases*, Cynthia Enloe (1990: 45) argues that:

Nationalism has typically sprung from masculinized memory, masculinized humiliation and masculinized hope'. She argues that women are relegated to minor, often symbolic, roles in nationalist movements and conflicts, either as icons of nationhood, to be elevated and defended, or as the booty or spoils of war, to be denigrated and disgraced. In either case, the real actors are men who are defending their freedom, their honour, their homeland and their women.

Culturalisation of social problems has been a problem in the practices and even in social work education and research since the 1980s in Sweden (Kamali, 2002). Such a problem has been increasing as a result of Neoliberalisation of Swedish society in general and its social policy in particular since the 1990s. Growing socioeconomic gaps in society have resulted in growing social problems which have created a heavy working burden for social workers. This is one of the reasons behind culturalisation of individual's social

problems (Jönsson, 2013; Kamali, 2002; Kamali & Jönsson, 2018a). This makes it possible to 'white wash' the shortcomings of social authorities' and social workers' interventions or the lack of interventions. Framing social problems as individual problems are the result of neoliberal reorganisation of the Swedish social work and social services in the name of professionalisation of social work practices (Kamali & Jönsson, 2018a). The role of migration processes, the Swedish reception and migration policies, war in the URMs' country of origin, power categories, such as class, gender among others are often ignored in such culturalisation bias. It is worth mentioning that already in the 1880s, among the findings of original research by Ravenstein (1885), it was shown that short-distance and within-country migration moves were typically dominated by women and long-distance migration dominated by men. This is a further reason as to why we have to be cautious regarding culturalisation of migration patterns in current studies concerning male overrepresentation among URMs. Culturalisation risks moving necessary attentions from global and socioeconomic structural transformations, and political decisions and their national and local consequences, to a diffuse conception of collateralised individual patterns of action (Jönsson, 2013; Kamali, 2015).

Framing childhood

Stories about the reasons for emigrating from the country of origin are the first means of legitimating why the URMs had to leave their countries. This is however not enough for them to get protection and PUT in Sweden. They also had to confirm that they are minors and have in accordance with the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child the right to stay in Sweden. Therefore, the age of the minors received a central role in their stories and answers to the questions.

One of the most important factors behind proving the individual's status as child is the burden to convince the Swedish migration authorities of their age. Throughout the interviews the participants occasionally referred to themselves as minors, and in many cases just provided a figure like 16 or 17 years old when answering the question of their age. They did not provide any further information about this and it seemed that they were not ready to develop their answers any more. This is understandable since being a under the age of 18 is one of the most important reasons for the Swedish Migration Board to provide the minors PUT. However, many social workers, i.e. 'staff from family-homes' and legal guardians said that the information about the

minors age is biased and many of them are over the age of 18, thus they should not be considered as a child. As Danesh puts it:

They [the URM]s lie a lot about their age. The majority of them are over the age of 18 and in some cases around 30 years old, but they say that they are younger than 18. This is a dilemma even for me since they tell me in confidence and I cannot reveal this to anyone, I hope that this information is handled properly even by you, but the truth is the truth, and you have to tell that in order to not destroy the entire policy of asylum and migration to Sweden.

The legal guardian, Björn, says that he is constantly being asked by the minors about the risks of being considered as 18 years old or more by the Migration Board. He says:

The minors are very concerned about this age thing, about being a minor or not, being under or over 18 years old. Many of them know that they are not a child, under 18 years old, but that they have to continue telling the authorities that they are under 18 years old in order to be considered a child and get PUT.

The restrictions implied on the asylum rights since the Swedish changing asylum policy since the 1990s have been one of the reasons behind a constant increasing immigration of URM]s to the country. According to the asylum statistics, the URM]s arriving into Sweden increased from 350 in year 2000 to 35.369 in year 2015.

The minors also had to deny having the protection of their families. The minors' story about contact with their families are puzzling initially. The majority mean that they have no contact with their families. Many says that their parents are either dead or missing. Golnar say that:

I lost my parents when we were on our way to Pakistan. It was crowded and chaotic, it was difficult to keep in touch and find each other, we had to run. I do not know what happened with them, if they are alive or not.

A few others did not want to answer this question since it was 'private' for them. This has of course to do with the legal requirements for obtaining PUT as a child since, according to the Swedish law, if a child has his or her parents in another country it means that they can get support and protection from their parents. However, in later part of the interviews many said that they have contact with their families indeed. This is in accordance to article 22, part

2, of The UN Convention of the Rights of the Child, which obliged all member states of the United Nation to:

In cases where no parents or other members of the family can be found, the child shall be accorded the same protection as any other child permanently or temporarily deprived of his or her family environment for any reason, as set forth in the present convention.

Although the convention obliges member states to protect children irrespective of their contacts with their families, many member states, including Sweden, have their own interpretation of the convention and mean that if URM's have contact with their families, i.e. know where they are living, such children are not to be considered in continuous need of carers and, or, legal guardians.

However, all participants knew about the legal frames for reunification with their parents. According to all interviews with the legal guardians and 'staff from family-homes', almost all URM's ask questions about family reunifications and are in frequent contact with their parents and other family members, whether they are living in the minors' country of origin or in another EU country. As Danesh, who is responsible for four URM's, living in his home, puts it:

I have worked with and been 'family-home' staff for many URM's during the last decade and know a lot about their contacts with their families. They used to say that they have no contact at all, or they have lost their families or parents at the border, or when they left their country.

The minors have proper information about the Swedish laws and the Migration Board's routines for decision about their residence permit. This is the main reason for the minors for not 'telling the truth' about their contacts with their parents. They must do so in order to prove their need of protection by Swedish authorities. As Björn says:

These children and youths know very well that if they say that they have contact with their parents, the Migration Board can then say that they are not in need of protection and must go back to their parents. They adjust their stories about their migration and contact with their families to the requirements of the Migration Board.

This fact is also confirmed by the municipal social workers and carers interviewed in this work. They say that the vast majority of the URM's were in contact with their families during the entire asylum process. Some of the carers said that upon arrival the minors would usually claim that their parents were either deceased or that they did not know anything about their fate. However, after some time at the 'family-home' they reveal that this was not the case and that they actually had contact with them in different ways. As Hasan illustrates this:

When the minors are just asylum seekers, they will state that they have no contact with their families, but in reality, this is not true. They have access to Facebook and they also receive 50-100 Swedish kronor per week to make international phone calls. As soon as they obtain their PUT, they will reveal that they do in fact have contact with their family and that they intend to lodge an application for family reunion. Many of them have been able to bring their families to Sweden.

Moreover, Hasan added that you should not believe in all of the information provided by the URM's to the Migration Board and the social workers, because according to his experience minors are prone to fabricate stories. Thus, it is difficult to distinguish a truth from a lie. He puts it in this way:

People have their own individual story. However, prior to arriving in Sweden they already know, to a certain extent, which kind of information they must give the Swedish authorities in order to acquire a permanent residence permit. For instance, living in armed conflict-stricken areas, witnessing the violent deaths of their parents. Such things are the reality for some of the minors, but some may also say whatever benefits them.

Armin, who works as a carer, expressed a similar attitude and described that even if the minors have emigrated from warzones, you must continuously remind yourself that you cannot verify nor dismiss their narratives. You have to listen to them but at the same time adopt a neutral stance. According to him, the URM's are aware of that mentioning traumatic events have a certain effect on authorities. Furthermore, several of the carers and municipal social workers said that they did not put any emphasis on whether a minor's story was correct or not.

To lie for protecting one's interests or prevent harm is a well-known part of human behaviour. Lying is a social behaviour of both adults and children (Lee, 2013). Lies are frequently used in a self-protecting manner (Polak & Harris, 1999; Talwar & Lee, 2002). Following Bourdieu's theory of 'symbolic

violence' one can conclude that URM, whether or not they are under the age of 18, have to lie or bend the truth about their journey, their contact with their parents and about their age, in order to make themselves adjusted to the requirements of the asylum laws in Sweden. Notwithstanding, a group of 4 social workers and legal guardians were keen to relate the URM's 'lies' to their culture.

Although many carers and legal guardians, i.e. 8 of 11, uttered their understanding for why the URM's 'lies', others were critical of the same matter by accusing the Swedish reception and asylum system for the 'lies': As Farideh, who is legal guardian for many URM, say:

I believe that there is something wrong with our system. Why is a minor able to initially state that their parents are deceased, but then reunite with them in Sweden after being granted a residence permit? These people should be stopped, in my opinion.

An interesting finding in this study is that many carers and social workers with immigrant background are more negative to the Swedish liberal asylum system than those with Swedish background. This can be understood by referring to earlier studies, which show that social workers with immigrant background are more restrictive and critical to 'clients' with immigrant background (Kamali, 2002, 2009). This is mainly due to the societal and systemic pressure on such social workers to be adjusted to the Swedish norms and social work practices. Saying that 'I know' based on their 'ethnic' and immigrant background is one of the most common reasons which were considered to legitimate their negative attitudes towards the URM and the Swedish liberal immigration policy. This kind of explanation, or understanding, used is called 'cultural competency' by which such negative attitudes are legitimated and social problems culturalised (Jönsson 2013; Kamali, 2002). Earlier research has shown that many social workers with immigrant backgrounds use their 'cultural background' as a legitimising factor for their harsher attitudes towards new immigrants in general and against URM in particular (Kamali, 2002, 2006a).

Many of the minors have been sent to Europe by their parents in hopes of better life chances for them. Living in countries like Afghanistan, which is suffering from long-term wars and conflicts which begun many decades ago, is problematic for many Afghans in general and for those in socioeconomic and political difficulties in particular. The destruction of the economic and social structures has eliminated many possibilities for having a normal life in Afghanistan. Although Afghan refugees are not in the same danger of wars

and conflicts in neighbouring countries, such as Iran and Pakistan, but their socioeconomic positions in those countries are far away from standard. Many are 'illegal' immigrants in those countries and as such lack the basic legal protection and working opportunities. This is one of the major reasons behind the decision of sending minors to Europe. Ahmad, one of the URM, puts it in this way:

Every time we were out looking for jobs, working, shopping or other things, we were very afraid of being stopped by police and sent back to Afghanistan. We were not safe and did not know if we could be in Iran the day after or not.

Many the URM told histories about confrontations with the police and how their family members were sent back to Afghanistan several times, but they continuously went back to Iran again. The migration to Europe has become one of the major opportunities for many Afghan families to obtain better living conditions. Since the increasing restrictions on immigration have been decided and implemented in many European countries, including Sweden, the emigration journey of the Afghan URM has become very risky. The URM's families expect that once their children have received PUT, they can legally move to a European country as a matter of family reunification. The minors, thus, feel responsible for taking their families to Sweden. This is a stressful matter for many URM since failure in receiving PUT in Sweden also mean failure for their families in reaching better living conditions. While waiting for PUT and for the possibility to bring their family to Sweden, many URM mentioned that they tried to assist their families with what they could in regards to economic assistance by transferring money to them whenever possible. Khalid explained that although he was living in a different part of the world, he still remains responsible for his family's welfare:

I am still responsible for my family. I did everything I could to bring them here but it did not happen. I have sent them money. There is a lot of pressure on me.

However, Jamal says that sending money to his family is a different form helping them out instead of bringing them to Sweden, since it is not the minors who make the final decision, but the Migration Board.

The expectations and responsibilities put on the URM for arranging the reunification in Sweden, have influenced many of the URM. Most URM found their relationship with their families to be virtuous and all of the participants stressed the importance of their family. However, three of the URM expressed that the responsibilities forced upon them at an early age

had taken a toll on their relationship with their families. Abbas, one of the minors, illustrates the responsibility on him in his country of origin in the following way:

My relationship with my family is not that good. I never played with my siblings because I was too busy with work. Being the oldest son means you have responsibilities. It is different there. You become a man when you are around 9 or 10 years old.

Several participants illuminate that young people working is necessary for their family's survival and that growing up in Afghanistan, and Iran, as mentioned earlier, implies great responsibilities for their household. Basar shares his view on this matter:

There are many dangers in Afghanistan. My dad was killed so I had to work, there was nobody else to make money so we could buy food and other necessities. It is not like here, that you can get help from the state, you are on your own and have to make your and your family's living.

This echo the findings of a study on child labour among Afghan youths, some households who faced economic insecurity and struggled to afford the basic necessities due to scarce and irregular employment resorted to child labour as a strategy to generate and increase income. A crucial aspect for when families decides upon whether or not to send their minors to work was the way they weigh the costs and benefits of work versus education. In addition, the high unemployment rates in Afghanistan combined with low-quality education made parents doubt that formal education would result in greater prospects, thus they found that their children's time would be more efficiently used for generating a family income. Moreover, the results showed that working at an early age may also be regarded as way of learning the necessary life skills needed for a successful future, therefore working is viewed as preparation for life as an adult (Heath & Zahedi, 2015).

The responsibility for bringing their families to Sweden is even in some cases larger and demanding. They have to 'pay back' by 'taking care' of the matters which influence their PUT in order to bring their families to Sweden as soon as possible. As Golnar puts it:

It was not cheap and free to move to Europe, to Sweden. My parents did not have much money to spend on us children, but my dad told me to leave the country since there was no future for me there. Being stateless, and being a girl, you do not

have many chances to become somebody, with education and so on. It is the same for my parents and my two sisters and one brother. I hope to bring them here now that I have my PUT. It is my duty, to pay back and to take care of my family. After all, the family is everything you have.

As the answer to the question of why she was sent to Europe, and not her brother, she said that it was because her brother was the only person in the family working. He was the one who provided for the entire family since her father had an accident at his work place. He had lost one leg, which made him almost unable to work.

However, one of the female URM, Maryam, said that she really did not want her family to come, since she found them to be controllers of her 'free life' in Sweden. She did not want to go back to the same situation that she had in her country of origin. She meant that she is now free and want to remain this way and believed that if her family comes to Sweden she will lose her social freedom. Maryam says:

It is difficult to make a sound decision, whatever I do will be wrong, I have to make a decision which is the least wrong one. It is difficult, I do not know what to do, but yes, I have to bring them here, I cannot betray them. After all they are my parents and my family. They have helped me to come here and helped me there, payed for my school and everything. Although I know that it is not going to be easy for me when they arrive, you know, with my dad and brother, but I cannot say that I do not care about them and their lives in that country. I do not feel very well about this.

Although the supervision and control of children is a matter of scientific debate, it is shown that parents' concern about 'fear of strangers', 'informal control', the dangers of deviant and social problems make them control their children and reduce their freedom mobility (Foster et al., 2013). This is even greater for girls than boys. As another female URM, Shirin, says:

When talking to them on the phone, they continue to ask about the society here, people's behaviour, teachers, boys, and stress all the time my own responsibility for protecting myself, since they are not here. They think that I cannot take care of myself alone and that I need somebody else, my parents in first place, to take care of me. They say that 'we heard that Swedish authorities do not care about free relations between boys and girls, alcohol consumption, when you come home'.

Such a conflictual position of the URM in general and for the females in particular is very demanding and influences their mental health and their everyday life in Sweden. Maryam even mentioned that her concentration problems in school is based on such an uneasy situation that she has. Another female URM, Leyla, also talked about having concentration difficulties in school, due to the fact that she was very distressed about not being able to bring her family to Sweden. She says that:

The school personnel and teachers, also the 'family-home' staff always stress the role of education and school for my future life in Sweden. How can I concentrate and do my best in the school when I am still waiting for the decision from the Migration Board, you do not know if you will receive a positive or negative decision, it takes up all your time and thoughts.

The uncertain position of URM in Sweden waiting for PUT and eventual family reunification should be considered in understanding the behavioural patterns of the minors in their everyday life in Sweden. It seems that they are torn into two parts: to be physically in Sweden, and mentally engaged with, and concerned about, their family's daily life in Afghanistan, Iran or Pakistan. One of the URM's most important 'duties' is to prove their childhood in order to make themselves entitled to receive PUT before reaching the age of 18, which enables them to bring their families to Sweden. Framing childhood is the minors' major responsibility in Sweden.

Not being in another EU country

In order to make themselves entitled to receive PUT, the URM have to prove that they have not been in another EU country and are coming to Sweden directly from Afghanistan. This is the reason for the minors to not reveal which country they are coming from. Although the URM told the author of this work that they are coming from Afghanistan, and in one case from Pakistan, the carers, the social workers, the 'staff from family homes', and legal guardians say that many of the URM are in reality coming from Iran and some from Pakistan. This is mainly because if the minors come from Afghanistan, their chances of being accepted as people in need of protection will be increased, since there is no war or serious conflicts in Iran and Pakistan.

All of the URM revealed that it was easy to locate and make contact with smugglers, both in Afghanistan and Iran. Jamal puts it in this way:

I found a smuggler in Iran. There is no problem finding a smuggler, even though it is illegal everyone knows about it and accepts it. Even the police know, but they do not intervene.

Some minors had connections within their own network which linked them directly to a smuggler. Others implied that certain places are well-known for having many smugglers. Thus, this is the first place to visit when one has decided to leave the country. Ahmad, who stated that he came to Sweden from Afghanistan, says that:

First, we went to Nimruz, a city located in the South-West of Afghanistan, it is where the smugglers can be found. From Nimruz we went to Pakistan, after that to Iran; Teheran and Urmia.

Many said that they left Afghanistan and travelled to Iran and that they ended up living there for a while prior to leaving for Europe. Abdullah describes the area between Afghanistan and Iran as mountainous and lacking roads, which, in some parts, prohibited them from using a vehicle thus forcing them to walk for several days. When in Iran, the participants explained that a smuggler transported them to an apartment in an unknown location. Khalid shares his experience:

My neighbour helped me to get in touch with a smuggler in Teheran. I paid the smuggler 4.000.000. Iranian toman, it was a lot of money. I do not know the location, it is supposed to be secret, but he took me to an apartment with several other people, they were in the same situation as me. Some were my age and some were a bit older. Both boys and girls, men and women. We had to stay inside for two days since no one could find out that we were there.

Several participants mentioned having to hide in numerous secret apartments and houses in Iran, Turkey and Greece. They pointed out that everyone made their own individual arrangement with the smuggler but that they had to share the hiding places with a large group of people. Most URMs used the 'pay as you go' arrangement when traveling, which involved relying on smugglers for transportation across the borders and paying them one leg at a time. Khalid mentioned that there were several smugglers involved and that the smuggler he originally initiated contact with was not the person who physically took him to Greece, he merely arranged for the transportations to be carried out by other smugglers. One of the minors, Basar, expressed that he knew that he was taking a fatal risk when trying to reach Europe:

There are thieves and smugglers who kill people. The police in Iran, Pakistan and Turkey are shooting people. They do not care about you, they do not even care that you are a human being. We knew about these dangers but still made the choice to travel. You have one life, there is no chance to live again. We needed a better life so we travelled.

Although, not all participants were initially aware of the risks involved with making the journey. Khalid states that he almost immediately regretted starting his journey:

Smugglers lie a lot. They told us it would only be a one-hour walk from Iran to the Turkish border. In reality, we had to walk for two days. I quickly realised that reaching Europe was not going to be easy. I was very afraid. During our walk to the Turkish border, I wanted to turn around and go home, but the smugglers did not care. If I wanted to go back, I had to do it by myself. How was I supposed to find my way home? There are no proper roads to follow. I had no choice but to continue.

The vast majority of the participants stated that they reached Turkey by vehicle and by walking. Khalid also mentioned fearing the Iranian police operating close to the Turkish border, as he did not want to be arrested. Jamal says that during his journey from Iran to Turkey, 'if the police had noticed us at the border between Iran and Turkey, they would have shot us. We were lucky. I was so afraid'.

Khalid mentioned that a new smuggler was waiting for them on the Turkish side of the border and that his mission was to drive them to a small village. Both him and Jamal declared that they were residing in multiple secret locations in Turkey, hence making contact with several smugglers in the country, and that certain measures were taken in order for them to go undiscovered. Khalid illustrate this as the following:

The smuggler made us change into nicer clothes so that we would blend in with the tourists. The smugglers in Turkey also used more expensive mini-vans which were typically used by tourists, so we looked like a group of vacationers when we were transferred to the next location. We also received fake passports.

Likewise, Jamal revealed that a smuggler in Turkey had provided him with a counterfeit passport in order to hide his real identity. He experienced living in Turkey as harsh because he was not familiar with the country nor could he

speak the Turkish language, thus he was completely dependent on the smuggler.

The smugglers were the ones who decided which route to take and in all the cases Greece was the following destination after Turkey. For the vast majority of the participants, Greece was also the final destination in accordance with the smuggler agreements. However, the URM's reveal that they did not want to stay in Greece or any other country with not as good asylum and protection laws and procedures as, for instance, Sweden. Hence, they had to be able to reach Sweden and not apply for asylum in Greece. This is because the Swedish asylum laws are influenced by the Dublin III Regulation whose main purpose is to assign responsibility for processing an asylum application to a single EU member state. The Dublin III Regulation also identifies the country responsible for examining an asylum application, which is the very first member state the asylum-seeker enters. This is called the principle of non-refoulement, which means that member states, all respecting the principle of non-refoulement, are considered as safe countries for third-country nationals (Regulation (EU) No 604/2013 of the European parliament and of the council, of 26 June 2013).

Khalid, who had decided to reach Sweden prior to beginning his journey, made an agreement which took him a bit further north, namely Italy. In the other cases, the minors arranged transportation out of Greece on their own. The physical journey from Iran to Turkey and then to Greece is described as the most dangerous part of the entire journey to Sweden. All of the participants crossed the Mediterranean Sea in an overcrowded and unsafe rubber dinghy. Some of the participants expressed that they were not sure if they were going to survive the voyage across the ocean and consider themselves as extremely lucky for not drowning. Abdullah shares his story:

I reached Greece by crossing the water in small rubber boat. It was not that much water, it looked like a small lake. I could not swim so for me it was dangerous. I had never even tried to swim so I was very afraid.

Three of the minors explained that, after arriving on Greek land, they were immediately picked up and detained by the Greek authorities. They were sent to a facility which they depict as resembling a prison and a refugee camp. After a day or two they were set free in Athens. From then on, they were to care for themselves, nothing was provided by the Greek state. Khalid describes his impression of Athens upon being released:

There were so many people there, refugees everywhere. So many people in the

same situation as me. It is hard to describe, but many people are trying to reach Europe.

All of the participants came to regard Greece as a transit country as the living conditions there were terrible. As Jamal puts it:

I spent one week in Athens. I lived in a park among cardboard boxes because I did not have that much money. I think I only had 100 Euros and I was unsure of how long I was going to stay in Greece. I found out that in order to get out of the country I had to travel to Patra, and from there hide in a truck destined for Italy.

Khalid, on the other hand, was quickly able to locate a specific smuggler due to his original arranged agreement. The smuggler hid him in a large apartment in Athens and after a while he was transferred to a hidden house in Patra. He stayed there for quite some time, around three months, along with several other individuals. He expressed that there were just boys staying at the house and that families and female URM's had to stay in Athens. Khalid also explained that the smugglers in Patra were able to help people attain counterfeit passports and plane tickets if one had enough means for it.

Furthermore, Khalid also said that his parents made all the payments to the original smuggler back in Iran as he was in charge of the whole procedure. Basar and Abbas explained that they had to wait in their hiding locations until their parents had completed a transaction, hence the time period of the emigration journey is affected by one's financial status. Not acquiring the sufficient financial means may also interrupt the journey, Jamal stated that he contemplated staying in Greece to work or study because he had run out of money and had problems finding transportation that could take him out of the country and further up north.

The URM's also stated that the smugglers had control over when they were leaving one location for another. A couple of the minors stated that they had to wait for an extended period of time in Turkey and Greece. As Abdullah puts it:

I stayed in Turkey for three and a half months. I did nothing there, I just waited for the smuggler to take me and the others to Greece. We received different information about the leaving date all the time. The smuggler could say; you are leaving today, then suddenly it was changed to the following day, then the day after that and so on.

None of the participants knew exactly how long their journey to Sweden took but according to their estimations it ranged from one and a half months to five months.

The URM's were very well informed about the immigration and asylum rules in Europe and tried to avoid being arrested or discovered in the transit countries. In the cases when they were arrested or stopped by the police in other countries than Sweden, which was their final destination, they say that they did everything to not leave their fingerprints or reveal their real identity. As Kahlid says about his stay in Greece:

We used to lie about our names and our origin. They [migration authorities in another EU country] did not ask a lot of question in the beginning. After about a week they would schedule an appointment to have our fingerprints taken. This was the only time we had to escape since we did not want to make our identities known for the migration authorities.

Some of the interviewed URM's said that they were stopped in other European countries, such as Germany, before travelling to Sweden. Therefore, they had to make themselves 'invisible' by not revealing their real identities for the police or migration authorities there. Abdullah says that:

The police stopped us in Germany when we were on a bus. They wanted to know who we were and where we were going. My friend and I escaped because we knew that if we left our fingerprints here it would be the end. You talk a lot with people, when you meet someone who speaks the same language you ask them questions. This way I found out that it was difficult to get PUT in Germany, and if you are denied this, they will send you back. We were afraid of them taking our fingerprints in Germany so we escaped.

This implies that there is an awareness of consequences when one's real identity is registered in a country one does not wish to seek asylum in. In order in to choose a final destination country, the URM's had to know about the asylum regulations in that country. Many say that they knew that Sweden will not reject them at the borders and that every minor arriving at the Swedish border will be allowed to enter the country. The Swedish liberal policy for accepting URM's during 2015 was well known among the URM's.

In reality, Sweden decided to not follow the Dublin Treaty on asylum rules during 2015, since URM's in relatively large scale entered the country and it was almost impossible for Sweden to reject them.

Some URM's expressed that they did not initially decide to come to Sweden, they merely wanted to reach any country in Europe. They, however, realised soon that all European countries are not the same and in many cases their situation worsened in countries such as Greece and Italy. The living conditions in Greece and Italy were not good for refugees. There were many refugees on the move and those countries had not enough resources to take care of everyone. Their expectations about 'Europe' rarely matched with the conditions they found in these countries (Donini, Monsutti & Scalettari, 2016) which was a major reason for continuing their journey further up north and away from Greece. Khalid shares his first experience of Greece:

When we reached the Greek border, the Greek police came and took us, they drove us to a large prison or refugee camp. They did a general health check-up on us, we were just there for one evening. They let us go and drove us to Athens, we searched for a park named Victoria. When I first saw this park, I thought that this is not Greece. All I saw was people from Afghanistan, Iran, it was like people from all over the world was there. I thought, fuck, everyone is going to Europe.

The URM's did not consider the journey from Greece to Sweden as particularly hazardous, as they explained that it was easy to arrange the different forms of transportation and that it was not difficult finding people who could assist them.

Summary

The themes presented and analysed in this chapter have been 'Sweden as the final destination' and 'Framing asylum status'. The results show that the URM's have to be active agents in the entire process of migration and application for asylum in Sweden. They are well-aware of the requirements for them to be accepted as an URM in Sweden. The agency of the URM's is proved on the basis that they are constructing the fact that they have been forced to leave their country of origin even if many of them came to Sweden from Iran. However, in this process, they have been guided by their parents, relatives, smugglers and other immigrants in their choices. Other factors influencing their choice of Sweden as their destination country have to do with '*Educational opportunities*' and possibilities in Sweden for family reunion. Many of the URM's have been sent to Sweden in order to receive PUT and because of their status as a child bring their families there as well. This has created a stress factor for many, since the URM's themselves feel solely responsible to realise such plans in order to bring their families to Sweden.

The category of *'Possibilities of family reunion'* is related to another category *'Liberal Swedish asylum policy'*, since the latter influenced the URM's decision of choosing Sweden as their emigration journey's final destination.

The other theme of the analysis of the material, i.e. *'Framing asylum status'*, was generated from the four categories of *'Forced to leave country of origin'*, *'Selective male emigration'*, *'Framing childhood'* and *'Not being in another EU country'*. The analysis of this part also shows that the URM's emigration journey and the choice of Sweden as their final destination have been based on conscious calculations and not a matter of chance or accident. They have received information from different sources about how to make themselves *'suitable'* for a Swedish permanent residence permit. Once arrived in Sweden, the URM's have to convince migration authorities that they had to leave their country of origin, i.e. Afghanistan, even if many of them came from Iran and not Afghanistan, since migration authorities do not consider Afghanistan to be a secure country. The second finding was that the reasons behind overrepresentation of males among URM's depended on several factors, such as the dangers involved in the emigration journey and the patriarchal order of the family. It is however important to not reduce such reasons to the diffuse concept of *'the others' culture'*.

One of the most important factors, which increases the URM's chances of receiving PUT in Sweden, is to convince migration authorities of their childhood and being under-aged. Many have admitted to their *'family-home'* staff, carers and the legal guardians that they did not disclose their true age, since this would put the possibility of receiving PUT in grave danger. As a few carers uttered, some URM's have jokingly said to them that *'we Afghans have two ages, one real and one for the migration authorities'*. This is indubitably due to the restrictions which have been put on the right to receive PUT in Sweden. The Afghan adults do not have the same chances to receive PUT compared to under-aged Afghans. Yet another factor to be considered by the URM's is to convince migration authorities that they have not been in another EU country prior to their arrival in Sweden. This is based on the URM's information about the Dublin Treaty, which urge asylum-seekers to apply for asylum in the first secure country they arrive in.

Chapter 6

Swedish reception system's possibilities and shortcomings for integration of unaccompanied refugee minors

Migration studies have shown that the ambitions for integration in the new country varies among immigrants depending on many parameters, such as individual histories, class, gender, level of education and their pre-migration information about the new country (Kamali, 2004). This can be completed by the reasons for emigration from their countries of origin, normally called push factors. In Chapter 5, I have discussed the reasons behind the URM's decision to choose Sweden as their final destination.

This part of this work concerns the problems and issues of integration of the URMs. The Swedish system of reception of new immigrants is mainly the duty of authorities, social authorities (e.g. municipal social workers) and social workers (e.g., carers, 'staff from family-home', legal guardians). The role of municipal social workers becomes even more important since the URMs are children and their welfare is the responsibility of social authorities. Meanwhile social authorities play an important role for the introduction of new immigrants in the Swedish society, their role in 'clientisation' of immigrants in Sweden has been criticised (Kamali, 2004). A strong Eurocentric understanding of the development of children and a 'child-centric' perception in which a child is seen as a helpless individual almost without responsibility for her/his life is also influencing the way social authorities work with URMs. Kamali (2004) argues that as soon as new immigrants enter the country, they become taken care of by social authorities and become informed of their rights and entitlements of the Swedish welfare system. There is no organic connection between the system of reception of immigrants and the integration policy of the country. This is according to Kamali (2004) a double-sided process in which immigrants run the risk of being clientised in the Swedish welfare system and not being able to be integrated on equal terms with people with Swedish background. As Thommessen, Corcoran and Todd (2015) mention, the anxiety and concern the URMs experience during the initial months in Sweden, while waiting for the outcome of their asylum application, becomes more complicated when they face another set of challenges in the host-society.

The problems of and barriers to the integration of immigrants in Sweden is also dependent on a severe existence of structural discrimination of immigrants in Sweden, such as the political system, the educational system, the labour market, the mass media, the judicial system and the housing market (Camaüer & Nohrstedt, 2006; de los Reyes, 2006; de los Reyes & Kamali, 2005; Kamali, 2006a; Sarneki, 2006). Increasing discrimination, racism and segregation make the early introduction of immigrants in Sweden more important than ever. The increasing electoral success of RPP in Sweden adds

to the complexity of the problem of racism and discrimination which hinders the integration and social cohesion in Sweden. It is not in Sweden only, but as recent research shows, integration policies in all member states are evolving and changing at a rapid pace, depending largely on the current political climate and composition of the government, including the role and participation of RPP in the political life of EU countries (Kamali, 2009; Wiesbrock, 2011).

The analysis of the material presented in this chapter is based on interviews with URMs, carers, municipal social workers, legal guardians and 'staff from family-homes'. This chapter presents and discusses the generated theme of the analysis, i.e. 'Swedish reception system's possibilities and shortcomings for integration of unaccompanied refugee minors'. The theme has been emerged from the three following categories: '*Schooling opportunities, contradictions of ambitions and realities*', '*The Swedish generous allowance system and clientisation of unaccompanied refugee minors*' and '*Social authorities' working routines*'.

Schooling opportunities, contradictions of ambitions and realities

Schooling and education play one of the most important roles in the introduction of refugee youths and children and facilitating the adjustment and success of this group in the new society (Niemeyer 2015; Oppedal & Idsøe, 2015; Taylor & Kaur Sidhu, 2012; Wilkinson, 2002). It is shown in several countries that the flexibility of the educational system has an important impact on the pathways and later success of especially the immigrant and refugee youth (Crul & Vermeulen, 2003; Derwing et al., 1999; Watt & Rosseingh, 1994; Wilkinson, 2002). According to some research, education plays a crucial role for the URM's understanding of their place in the new society and the development of a sense of belonging to the new society (Bitzi & Landolt, 2017).

Several studies show the structural barriers to integration of pupils with immigrant background in Swedish schools (Sawyer & Kamali, 2006). This fact makes the question of integration of URMs even more important in a time of rapid changing labour market and the need for educated labour force. Many URMs comes from societies where the majority of them have had no, or limited, opportunities to education. There are of course differences between the countries the URMs come from and their socioeconomic living conditions in their countries of origin. All of the carers find that the URMs display both willingness and unwillingness to integration. There is no consensus among URMs about what they want for their lives in Sweden. According to the carers,

attending school and taking their education seriously is a main indicator for the ambitions and willingness to integration. However, the willingness to be educated in Sweden and going to school has also to do with the URM's earlier experience of schooling. Those who have attended school prior to arriving in Sweden are usually focused on further education. They have predefined goals which includes pursuing studies at university level, they have ambitions of becoming lawyers and doctors for monetary and status reasons. Armin, a carer, puts it in this way:

You can immediately tell when someone want to become integrated or not. Boys who have studied in their country of origin are very focused on getting an education, they want to become lawyers or doctors. They know that you earn a lot of money with those kinds of jobs, which in turn will give them a high-quality life.

Some carers mean that there are differences in the ambitions for schooling between various groups, including different gender categories of the same group. As Martin puts it:

There are differences. If I generalise a little, girls from Afghanistan are often very clever and determined in their education. Boys from Afghanistan prefer leisure activities and things like that. Girls from Somalia, I do not want to say that they are lazy, but they have a different ambition, as they often say. Not everyone, absolutely not everyone, but many, they are here, they want to find a Somalian husband and have children. So, education is not so important for them. For Afghan girls it is a bit different, they are ambitious and are more interested in school and education.

Several other carers also express that female URMs from Somalia are more difficult to integrate, in general, as they have the same predetermined future, which is to become housewives. Nicholas puts it in this way:

Somalian females do not buy the concept of having to work. Even if their ambitions in school is high, they still end up getting married and having children instead of working. It is their way of thinking. They are not too interested in integration.

A few carers have noticed that some female URMs are controlled or supervised, either by their families back home, by relatives living in Sweden, or by male URMs in their surroundings. They have certain opinions about what females can and cannot do and what people they may socialise with. These findings signal that what some professionals regard as 'unwillingness to integrate' may be rooted in values and beliefs about gender roles. Since

such attitudes towards different groups of URM's cannot be controlled by interviews with, for instance Somalian URM's, or by other statistical materials, such attitudes can be presented as based on the carers' personal experiences or attitudes. No one of the carers interviewed in this work have adequate education in order to make a qualified assessment about the reasons behind the low motivation among, for instance Somalian girls, for education. As known, Somalia is a country harmed by almost forty years of civil war and violence, which have made participation in a normal education almost impossible for many, including girls. This provides an explanation for the low level of interest in education among Somalian girls as almost biased. Many carers either explicitly or implicitly relate the lack of interest in education among Somalians, in general, and among girls in particular, to their culture or 'their way of thinking'.

The lack of interest in education is not, however, a problem among Somalians, other groups among URM's also show such disinterest. Four male Afghan URM's say that they do not really want to go to school. They consider schooling to be 'unnecessary' for their future lives in Sweden. As 17-year old Hossein says:

Why I should go to school? I do not want to go to school, it is a waste of time. I have waited for my residence permit so now I want to work. I have worked my entire life, education gives me nothing, I am not interested. I need to earn money and live, help my family and do other things, why must I go to school? It is silly, they force me go to school.

The fact that many Afghan URM's have had to work in their country of origin, either Afghanistan or Iran, bring some clarity to the existence of the lack of enthusiasm in schooling and education. They are used to work and are willing to start working as soon as they receive their residence permit. In addition, some of them are in need of money in order to either pay back the costs of their migration journey or send money to their deprived families in their countries of origin. As one of the URM's, Hossein, say:

Everyone here talks about going to university, educate themselves to become teachers, engineers or so. I know that this is nothing for me, see Akbar who takes care of us, has never been to university but earns much more money than you or those who eagerly want to go to university. I can start my own business, it is enough to have a restaurant. I know many who earn huge money, they can buy the best and most expensive cars, have houses and travel wherever they want. They have no needs because they have it all.

The results show also that there are some differences between the male and female URMs in terms of schooling and education. Many girls with Afghan background are more positive to school and education than boys. They see the education as a chance to overcome some of the difficulties they met in their lives as girls in their countries of origin. Leyla say:

There are many things that boys were better off for in Iran, like working in construction industries, it was not difficult for them to find jobs and earn money, but it was not so easy for us girls. We should help at home and even if we could go to school, it was not supported by my parents. They did not want me to get so close with Iranians, other girls or boys. They saw school as something unnecessary for girls. But here, I want to study, educate myself and become something, I hope to be able to become a doctor or a teacher, you never know, because there is nothing that can stop me, I can do whatever I want.

Although the female URMs' more positive attitudes towards education can be traced back to, or be influenced by, their earlier lives in their countries of origin, there are other explanations. Many girls were supposed help their families and not work, as this have mainly been the boys' responsibility. This may have played a role in the higher motivation for education in Sweden among girls. As Maryam, say:

My family allowed me to go to school in Iran, they said this is good for you, education is good for girls, it is better than sitting home and doing nothing. You may even get a job in the future. Even if we Afghan refugees were not normally allowed to go to school, I succeeded to go to school in a few years. I did not need to help my family by working, because it was not easy, and in some cases, it was even dangerous for a girl.

However, the higher motivation for education and schooling among girls compared to boys is not exclusively something for the Afghan URMs, this is also something which has been proven even among Swedish girls. Studies since early 2000s show that Swedish female pupils are more motivated in schools and show much better educational results than male pupils (OECD PISA 2000; OECD PISA 2015). However, there are studies which stress the structural factors behind the differences between girls and boys in schools. They mean that the socioeconomic backgrounds play almost as an important role as gender differences and that one should be careful to over-emphasise gender differences as a fact independent from socioeconomic and political surroundings. Some researchers mean that the belief in that 'everything will

be just fine' among boys is a reason behind boys' failure in their education (Wernersson, 2010). The labour market of a society, such as Sweden, also plays a major role in motivation for education among girls and boys.

However, such a positive attitude towards school and education is not exclusively for girls, even one of the boys, Ahmad, was very interested in education and have shown very good results in school. He has already managed to start his upper secondary school education. He says that:

Education is very important, you can then become whatever you want. I knew from the beginning, before coming to Sweden that I want to study, to educate myself, to become an engineer. I like technical subjects, I want to be a computer programmer. I do not care about what the others say or do, I want to get an education and move forward.

Jamal, highlights that there are numerous opportunities given to URMs in Sweden but that many of them discard them:

People who are born in Sweden might not understand the opportunities URMs actually have. Those coming from Syria, Somalia and Afghanistan have been in the exact same situation as me, war and problems. They understand the opportunities they have here. I feel bad for those who do not take advantage of this. For example, when I first came here a guy from Somalia had already been living here for some time. Today, he is still learning Swedish while I have graduated upper secondary school. So, they do not take things seriously. I do not know what they want. They have to do something. If you do not have ambitions, no one will help you.

The results show that categorisations, such as girls and boys, risks to mask a proper analysis of the reasons behind the differences between some girls' and some boys' interests in education. The categories, boys and girls, as every other category, have internal differences and lack the same 'content' which makes these two categories completely different from each other (Heikkila, 2014). An intersectional approach stresses the search for the internal differences between each category in order to avoid the mistakes of unqualified generalisations and biased results (Anthias, 2012; Hankivksy, 2014; Lykke, 2009; McCall, 2005; Viruell-Fuentes, Miranda & Abdulrahim, 2012; Walby, Armstrong & Strid, 2012; Yuval-Davis, 2006). As Shirin explained:

We had opportunities, we were not poor, my dad wanted me to educate myself and go to school. He used to drive me in his own car to school, in order to avoid

any problems for me. He had good contacts with the school personnel. Other girls who were in my school were also from good families, open-minded who wanted their girls to become something, not sitting at home and not doing anything.

As she indicates, Shirin belongs to a socioeconomically better off family and had the opportunity in Afghanistan to go to school. This is not the case for many others who had no access to secure education for girls and boys. Although it was more difficult for girls than boys to go to school in Afghanistan, it was not all boys who went to school and educated themselves. Not only in Afghanistan, but also in Iran, their family's socioeconomic status played a role for their schooling. Ahmed puts it in the following way:

My family could pay for my education, I succeeded to go to school and not miss so much in my education, it cost money, but we were not completely poor, but had better economy compared with many other Afghan refugees.

Other boys and girls had not the same attitudes towards education and schooling, mainly based on their socioeconomic backgrounds in their country of origin and their earlier educational success. Many said that they lack the necessary earlier knowledge in order to be able to participate in the same classes as others in their age. That is why, many do not want to go to school and prefer to get a job and make money.

The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights declares the need of Specific education designed to facilitate refugee minors' access to and integration in the member states' national educational system (FRA, 2010). This urges all member states to adjust their national policies concerning the education of URM's to the EU policy, notwithstanding the lack of many URM's unwillingness to participate in education and schooling in the member states. School difficulties, which can also reinforce some of the URM's low interest in school and education is that the URM have very different backgrounds, both when it comes to previous education and their situation in the host country. Research from Norway show that almost half of the URM's leave the school without finishing their education. Eide (2000) believe that there are two reasons for this, one being that they do not understand the school system, and, the second, that they do not like the way the tutoring is held in the classroom. Lødding (2009) found that youths that quit high school are tired of school, and do not feel that the time spent in school is meaningful. Basar stresses that he is not pleased about his current situation in school:

One of the biggest problems for me right now is school and the language. I cannot go to a proper school. I am in the ninth grade, but before I came here I was in the tenth grade, now there is no school, just language class and I am not learning anything, I have wasted my time.

Joseph, who is the head of multiple residential homes, say that the school system must change drastically, as is it is deeply flawed when it comes to administrating URM. He utters that many ambitious URM in his municipality have been negatively affected by the 'refugee crisis' of autumn 2015:

It is chaos in the schools. There are too many URM and they do not know how to handle it. Some minors are forced to repeat the Swedish Introductory Course several times because there is no room for them in the class above. The introductory course is supposed to last for three months, but they must wait until a normal class can take them in. Another problem is that they keep adding new pupils in the introductory classes, thus the teachers have to start from the beginning several times. Repeating the same class over and over does not motivate them to continue learning, their energy is gone. They start skipping school, they stay at home which results in reduced financial benefits. They kind of just quit. The schools today do not have the resources nor the facilities. The schools should be twice as big and there should be twice as many teachers.

Another problem facing the URM in schools is the way the education is organised. All of the URM (11), except one, are participating in the Swedish Introductory Courses, which aims at preparing the URM for education and integration in the Swedish normal school system. This have increased school segregation in two ways, one is that many schools with high levels of pupils with immigrant backgrounds organise such introductory courses, which reduce the URM's chances of contact with pupils with Swedish background. The second reason for increasing school segregation is that the specificity of such courses forces the URM to spend most of their time socialising together. As one of the minors, Ahmad says:

We are always together, we go together to school, hanging out together in the school yard, in the school restaurant, on the buss, at home, everywhere. Even if you meet other people in the school, they are also immigrants, even if they are born here. Our only contact with Swedes is our teacher, she is nice and kind but it is not like she is our friend or can talk to us and hang around with us all the time.

Basar describes a similar situation when talking about his experience of school in Sweden:

I go to upper secondary school but in my class there are also other boys from Afghanistan. It is hard for us there, we are trying to talk Swedish with each other but it is not going well. It is easier for us to speak in Persian. We cannot practice Swedish with just each other. If we were with Swedish boys, that would be great. To have contact with them would be very effective in order to learn the language.

All of the participants in this study states that is very rare for URM's to create and maintain friendships with Swedish youths. It is more common for URM's to socialise with each other and with Swedes who have a similar immigrant background. Joseph continues:

The schools have a lot to work when it comes to integration. Even if they go to school with Swedish youths and play football with them, there is still this divide of 'us and them'.

The participants mean that the main reason for this is language barriers and 'cultural differences'. The notion of 'cultural differences' is frequently used in order to 'rationalise' many problems of integration and find a 'clarification' (Baianstovu, 2017; Eliassi, 2015; Gruber, 2016; Jönsson, 2013; Kamali, 2002; Kamali & Jönsson, 2018a; Lalander & Raoof, 2016). This has been a common trend among carers and 'staff from family-homes', and even among some URM's. This is not surprising, since culturalisation of social problems are not only done by majority society agents, but also by people with immigrant backgrounds (Jönsson, 2013 Kamali, 2002).

Other problems of integration of URM's in the Swedish school is both school segregation and internal ethnic segregation in schools. It is known that there is a widening social gap between ethnic Swedes and migrant minorities (Bunar, 2016). There are even other problems, such as inadequate support structures, lack of space caused by the sudden arrival of large numbers of refugee students, uneven allocation of newly arrivals among municipalities and schools and physical segregation and social exclusion (e.g., Bunar, 2015; Nilsson, 2017), influence negatively the URM's interests for Swedish schools. Even in schools with many pupils with Swedish background, it is difficult for URM's to find 'Swedish friends' and develop contacts with them. One of the legal guardians, Björn puts it in this way:

It is difficult, in all schools the URM's only hang out with each other. All the Swedish youths are busy on their phones, phones should be prohibited in school, they do not make any contact with the URM's.

The difficulties in the development of normal relationships between pupils with immigrant background and pupils with Swedish background have been observed by earlier research (Sawyer & Kamali, 2006). Internal segregations in schools can neither be exclusively related to the URM's or to school only. Segregation and marginalisation of people with immigrant backgrounds have been researched for a relatively long period of time. Research relate segregation and marginalisation to structural and institutional discrimination of people with immigrant background (de los Reyes, 2006; de los Reyes & Kamali, 2005; Kamali, 1999, 2006a, 2009). Although contacts between pupils with immigrant background and pupils with Swedish background may help increase understanding and the development of individual relationship, this alone cannot solve the question of integration of URM's in the Swedish school system. The problem of 'culturalisation of the 'others', 'otherisation of people with immigrant backgrounds' in school curriculum has been considered as reasons behind dropouts and lower school result of pupils with immigrant background.

The 'situation for URM's is much tougher than they explain to you', as one of the 'staff from a family-home', Danesh, says. The problems thus for the school integration of the URM's are multidimensional. Their efforts to continue living based on the past and building a new life during a period of transition between different countries and between childhood and adulthood in the new country create a paradox by making the URM's simultaneously both empowered and powerless (Gustafsson et al., 2012). In the new country there are possibilities to do and realise things, both in the short term and the long term, but there are also structures which limit these possibilities, including taking responsibility for one's own life (ibid).

The Swedish generous allowance system and clientisation of unaccompanied refugee minors

It has been argued that the tradition of social engineering and the 'clientalisation' of migrants have contributed to the limited success of Swedish integration policies (Kamali, 2004; Westin, 2002). The comprehensive Swedish welfare system, in which most aspects of a migrant's life are regulated by the state and social authorities, negatively affects migrants' auto-reliance and self-initiative. Extensive reliance on the state as a care-taker can lead to a situation

of 'learned helplessness' (Lindbeck, 1986: 77), reducing the chance for migrants to become integrated into the regular labour market on equal terms. Järvinen and Mik-Meyer (2003) argue that clientisation, as a process, creates the citizen's experience of not being seen as an equal, but being a subject to a powerful system and sanctions from professionals. This makes people in need to do whatever the system wants them to do. The clientisation of people who access social housing, food services and other programs run the risk of entrenching the social inequities that they experience in other aspects of their lives and can contribute to anxiety, conflict, and further withdrawal from other social activities (Wittmer & Parizeau, 2018).

It is shown that the much-appreciated Swedish integration policy, regarded as one of the best among EU countries, has not been successful in creating a more integrated society (Wiesbrock, 2011). The image of Sweden as a society with a generous welfare system, in which individuals' needs are the ground for generous allowances, is highly established among many immigrants who come to Sweden (Kamali, 2004). This is also confirmed by all of the interviewed social workers in this work. They claim that the majority of the URM's have a profoundly distorted image of Sweden upon arrival. Many municipal social workers and carers mean that URM's have the preconception that Sweden is a rich country with a generous welfare state, which entitles them to extensive services and meets their substantial needs. Lena, a carer, says:

I am convinced that they have no idea what their living situation is actually going to be like in Sweden prior to their arrival. Because many of them say that 'Sweden can fix everything, you can buy everything, you can help me, you can get me an apartment, you can help me get a driver's license'. For them it is so simple, this is just the way things are in Sweden.

Another social worker, Joseph, says that some agents in the 'migration chain', such as the smugglers, contribute to creating a skewed image of Sweden:

I have heard some outrageous stories about the information the minors have gotten from smugglers. The smugglers told them that when they arrive in Sweden, they will get their own two-bedroom apartment, a lot of money, a laptop, unlimited access to buy clothes, food and that everyone in Sweden will give them whatever they ask for. It is a cycle of promises. When they finally arrive here they realise that what they have been told is not the reality. Of course, this is going to cause frustration. They know that the emigration journey has cost them a lot of money, which is problematic, they say that 'my family has paid a large sum of money for

me to come here but I am not getting anything'. It makes them irritated. Many of them have to send money to their families, some probably own the smugglers money too.

Many carers say that URM's who believe that Sweden is a paradise do not initially show willingness to integration. However, the willingness can occur at a later stage, especially for those who realise that depending on social services and living off benefits is not that great. In contrast, those whose ambition is to live off benefits for the rest of their lives do not care about integration. Some carers express that they struggle with trying to get the URM's to comprehend that Swedish society is built on solidarity, that it is important for everyone to contribute to society by working and paying taxes. The attitude that many URM's fully understand how society works but show no interest in wanting to be part of it, is highly frequent among carers.

Some carers make generalisations and differences between different groups of URM's. They mean different 'nationalities' have different problems. Nicholas says:

We have had problems with Syrians. Overall, their level of ambition is the lowest among all of the URM's. It does not include every single Syrian, of course, they are individuals, but in general they just want a smooth life rather than putting in the work.

Several carers express that male URM's display unwillingness to integration. They are quite content with their current life at the residential home since they receive money and have a place to live. According to the carers, they are (ab)using the Swedish welfare state in order to have a comfortable life in Sweden. They have knowledge about how the Swedish welfare system works and are using the system to live a good life here without working. As Armin puts it:

They live in Sweden now, they are receiving money without having to make an effort and they are living their best life. They have money, a place to live, and they are aware that it does not matter whether one works or not, you will still receive money. The social services will pay everything for them, so they know that you are able to live a good life in Sweden without working until you are 65 years old. They know that the welfare state will provide for them throughout their lifetime.

Others name the same problems of integration for Afghan URM's. This makes such judgements of differences not really reliable. This means that putting all

the carers' answers together, one can clearly see that they mean that notwithstanding differences, the majority of URM's have no intentions of integration in Sweden, since they receive 'whatever they want'. As Saleh, 'staff from a family-home', puts it:

I ask myself, why must they have a willingness to work, to do anything, since they receive everything? They have more money than my own son in the same age. My son said to me a few days ago, 'dad why does a guy from Afghanistan who is in my school have much more money than what you give to me. He has an iPhone 7 or 8, I do not know exactly, and shows that he has a couple of thousand in his pocket'. What could I answer him?

A major part of the carers' job is to inform the URM's about their rights and entitlements as well as their obligations. According to several municipal social workers, carers and the 'staff from family-homes', the URM's have a lot of knowledge regarding their rights prior to their arrival in Sweden, especially when it comes to being entitled monetary benefits. Lena gives an example:

Some do know their rights very well, better than us even, they are not the most successful minors though. I had one minor tell me that he wanted PUT because he would receive money, he knew the exact sum. It really surprised me that he knew that after only being in Sweden for a week.

Nicholas adds that many URM's have the misconception that they will get a bunch of expensive things immediately. They have this image that Sweden is a land of milk and honey. They soon realise that it is just a myth and that the amount of money they receive is not enough, it is not what they expected. All the rights they thought they had prior to arrival does not match with reality. It is very frustrating for them because their families expect them to send home money. According to Bodil, a municipal social worker, the URM's mainly focus on money during their meetings with her, especially in the beginning. She puts it in the following:

What they express is their need for money. Money, money, money. It is either money to send to their families or money to buy material things, as many things as possible. They have heard that Sweden is a rich country and that you can get an iPhone immediately.

Joseph says that, overall, the URM's know their rights inside out, specifically in regards to receiving things, but they have no knowledge when it comes to

obligations towards the society. Armin states that having discussions about societal obligations can be a hazard, but it is necessary:

I have tried to explain to them that the welfare system and social security benefits is only intended for those who are unable to work. It is for sick people and not for strong 18-year olds. I keep telling them to go out and learn something, get an education. Contribute to society instead of lying in bed till noon and then visit the city centre just to smoke weed everyday. I think this is a part of our mission, they do not have any parents, we do not have to act as their parents but we have to show them how to do things. Give good examples.

Likewise, Nicholas aluminates the duty of providing URM's information about the importance of working and paying taxes in order for Sweden to function. Thus, URM's cannot live off of social security benefits until they are 65 years old, they tell the URM's that they have to be a part of the system in order for Sweden to function as a nation. In alignment with Joseph, he believes that URM's are in need of good role models when it comes to integration. According to him they can sometimes be found within a minor's own ethnic group:

Some Eritreans have these role models in their network, they consist of a few adult Eritreans who are educated, employed and have lots of contact with Swedish people. The Eritrean URM's strive to be like them. I have seen the same example within a group of Afghans. They need role models like this and not people who show them how to maximise their social security benefits.

The generous welfare allowances to URM's risk to create a 'dependency lifestyle' which will influence their future living conditions and lead to long-standing marginalisation in Sweden. This is called clientisation of immigrants in Sweden created by social authorities and other Swedish welfare organisations and institutions (Kamali, 2004). Given the fact that many of the URM's are sooner or later going to reach the legal age of 18, their generous rights to welfare will be obscured. Many then face a situation in which they have to take more responsibility for their life in the new country, in a situation where they have not been prepared for an independent life. Khalid, who recently moved to a 'support residency', reflects on such a change:

I was involved in a lot more activities while living at the residential home compared to now. Everything is so expensive. When I lived in the residential home, I did not think about how much everything cost, the facility just paid for it all. I

was not aware of the amount. For example, the carers just informed us that we were going for a trip on the weekend. I did not think about the preparation or the expenses for food, facility or petrol. Nothing. Nowadays you have to take these things into consideration. I wish I could afford to do more things. I feel lonely.

However, the lack of preconditions for integration, i.e. taking responsibility for one's own life, have forced social authorities to continue to provide welfare support to URM's even if they have reached the age of 18, which turns them to be an adult person and not a child anymore. Mary, a municipal social worker, says that her unit is responsible for the URM's until they have reached the age of 21. When becoming 18 years old, thus of adult age, they may end their contact with the social authorities if they wish, although that is very rare. She says:

When we end our contact with a minor we always inform them about which departments to turn to if they need help, such as financial support. I believe most of those who are 21 and older still have contact with social services, because of the social security benefits.

Several participants say that majority of the URM's are in need of continued support after turning 18 years old. Some also discuss the problems occurring when an URM brings her/his family to Sweden, since the whole family expects the minor to provide for them and take care of them. This puts the URM's in an extremely tough position because they have built their own life and created new social networks in Sweden, they also have school to focus on. Thus, reuniting with family often means being uprooted from their new life in Sweden, as they become responsible for their families and are required to spend most of their time with them. Joseph reflects on the issues:

Many of them have asked us for help. We can either transfer them to our 18+ 'support residence' where they get to live on their own in an apartment with minimal support from us, or we can refer them to the welfare state, thus the social services take care of them. So, they are standing at a crossroad and have to make a choice, to either live independently or let the welfare state provide for them. They always choose the latter, so we continue helping them. They cannot handle going to school while at the same time helping their mom and dad get in touch with different authorities, they have to translate everything because the family does not understand Swedish. It is too tough for them. There is no time left for them to focus on their own life.

One of the participants, Khalid, also talks about his responsibilities for his family who now resides in Sweden:

I have tried contacting the Migration Board but they say there is no room for them here. I wish we could live in the same city so that I could help them. I want to help my siblings with school, shopping, schedule appointments. My family is not getting much help right now, it is a small city and there are not enough interpreters. I am not sure if they will be granted asylum here, so I am very worried.

Many carers mention having problems with colleagues who feel sorry for the URMs, thus they tend to treat them as small children, which subsequently encourages dependency. Astrid, points out that many URMs are traumatised and have been through some horrible things, thus it is important to be understanding about their situation while working, but you cannot base your work on 'feeling sorry for them', that never ends well. This view is also shared by Jamal who arrived in Sweden at the age of 13 and spent five years living in a residential home. According to his own personal experience, the carers were too focused on 'taking care of them' and they would give the minors whatever they needed. He is also noticing the same behaviours among today's carers, his friends who are currently living at residential homes have the carers do whatever they ask them. Jamal says the following:

Carers have to let the youths gradually become more and more independent. This is not the case, it is not right to take care of every single need of the URM. I think I benefited by coming to Sweden at a pretty young age. Those who are older, 16 or 17, they do not have much time to prepare for a life on their own outside of the residential home. In the country I come from many live with their parents until they are 30 or 40 years old.

Jamal's words show that carers may prevent URMs from becoming independent and integrated by catering to their every single need. Furthermore, a few carers even mentioned that in some cases minors have become so accustomed to the daily support surrounding them that they do not want to leave the residential home and live on their own. Joseph explains that the notion of having to support oneself is tough for many URMs:

Towards the end of a minor's stay at the residential home I talk to them about living independently. Some of the minors have been great because they have done what they were supposed to do, and school is working out for them, but then there are those who do not care about anything. They just expect service, service, service

from the carers. I remind them that this is going to end since they have to leave when they turn 18 years old. If they do not leave voluntarily, we will get the police to remove them. Those who have ambitions and have put in the work have no problem with this. I mean, they have had their ups and downs but still managed. It is worse for those who never cared about anything. Realising that they will be on their own within six or twelve months is like a cold shower for many of them. They have to manage school, all contacts with different authorities and apply for social security benefits all on their own.

Issues with not wanting to live independently may also occur among URM^s who are placed in 'family-homes'. Abdullah, who is almost 18 years old, mentions that he is not ready to move out from his 'family-home' and that he intends to continue living there even after becoming an adult. He puts it in this way:

I live in a 'family-home' now and I like it, I am pleased. If I do not like it there my caseworker will find me a new 'family-home'. I have my own room in the apartment. My 'family-home' dad is nice, he has told me that he is going to help me with everything. Anything I want. [...] My caseworker has told me that when I turn 18, I have to decide whether I want to live alone or not. My 'family-home' dad says that I can continue living with him. It is very difficult to live by yourself. If I live in an apartment by myself, I have to take myself to school, cook, do the dishes. I cannot do that on my own. I want to continue living in my 'family-home'. We will see what happens. If I do get an apartment the social services will pay my rent until I am 21, after that I have to pay for it by myself, the rent, everything.

This seems to be a common trait among many URM^s who have developed a 'dependency lifestyle'. As Kamali (2004) argues, many immigrants have gone through a difficult and demanding 'migration journey' to Sweden and succeeded to come to Sweden and receive a residence permit and that is why they are even able to live in a country like Sweden. The problem, according to Kamali, is the Swedish authorities' lack of adequate working routines for the reception of and preparing URM^s for an independent life in Sweden.

Another phenomenon which reinforces the URM^s 'dependency lifestyle' and adds to the complexity of their integration is the close connections between URM^s. This has been put forward by several interviewed carers who mean that socialising with people with the same ethnic background may hinder the process of integration. Some of the carers expresses that the URM^s say that they want to make Swedish friends, but that they do not make an effort to realise that. They mean that it is easier to be around those who speak

the same language as oneself, which subsequently makes the learning of the Swedish language even more difficult. However, the carers hold mainly the URMs responsible for the lack of 'Swedes' in their networks. They rarely talk about school segregation and the problems of prejudices and racism in Swedish schools (Gruber, 2007; Hällgren, 2005; Sawyer & Kamali 2006; Tesfahuney, 1999). This is a matter that is neglected even by many teachers in Swedish schools, which makes adequate measures for combating racism and promoting integration of pupils with immigrant backgrounds difficult (Rosvall & Öhrn, 2014). When mentioning racism in their interviews, some social workers participating in this study, who have the major responsibility for the URMs, see racism to be an internal matter of the URMs. As Bodil puts it:

But, of course, there is a lot of racism, there is a lot of racism among these people, racism is more common among them than in Sweden. A minor from Afghanistan never liked his legal guardian, she wore a veil and had lived in Sweden for 30 years. She did an excellent job but the minor was never pleased, he never liked her.

It was almost a total lack of knowledge about everyday racism and structural barriers in the Swedish school system among municipal social workers and carers.

Social authorities' working routines

Another barrier to the integration of the URMs is the municipal social workers' working routines. It is argued that a problem for the integration of the immigrants in Sweden has been social authorities' 'taking care culture', i.e. considering immigrants to be passive individuals and families formed by multiple and long-standing needs, which should be handled by social authorities (Kamali, 2004). As discussed in the former section, the Swedish reception system and social authorities seems to continue to do the same for the URMs, i.e. make them dependent of services from the authorities. The majority of the municipal social workers do not see themselves as responsible for the integration of the URMs. Those participating in this study states that carers at the residential homes are the ones who have daily contact with URMs, and therefore have the main responsibility for the URMs integration into the Swedish society. They identify integration as something that is done practically by 'taking the minors outside to explore the Swedish society in order to learn how things work'. In addition, many municipal social workers do not have a clear understanding of the concept and actions of integration.

The municipal social worker, Bodil, thinks that there is no distinct definition of what integration is, thus it can be anything:

Integration is such a broad term, in one sense everything is integration. We discuss all kinds of things when we meet with the minors, so I think that is absolutely part of their integration. I do not practically work with integration, other people work with integrating them into society.

Another municipal social worker, Lisa, expresses that she works with integration to a certain extent because each URM is assigned a specific 'contact person':

We put the minors in contact with people who have a different background from them. They get to know a person who they might never have gotten to meet if it were not for us putting them together. The contact person will bring their URM along for activities and show them how society works. The residential home carers also work a lot with this, show them how things work in the Swedish society. Anything really.

Many municipal social workers see themselves to be 'caseworkers' who just work with individual cases and have no responsibility for the integration of the URMs in Swedish society. Mary does not consider integration to be related to her working routines:

No, working with integration is not something I do as a caseworker. I assess the URM's needs and then conduct a plan of care. The URM is placed either in a residential home or in a 'family-home'. Some have problems with their mental health, or problems with drug addiction, so then I have to find suitable placements for them. For the most part, my job consists of documenting everything, assessing URMs' needs and finding new accommodations if their placement is not working out. I have to meet with them every third month, some minors need a lot of support and some need less.

One of the problems of the integration of the URMs created by social authorities is the placement of the URMs in 'family-homes' or residential homes. Municipal social workers may unconsciously counteract the URMs integration process by placing them in unsuitable 'family-homes' and private owned residential homes. Many 'staff from family-homes' and residential homes are interested in accepting URMs because of the very generous

payments by social authorities. As Danesh, one of the 'staff from a family-home' say:

It is unbelievable how much money they [social authorities] pay for each URM. They pay high rates for them, plus, you can just tell them that 'this boy needs extra attention which costs us more money', and they will pay it right away. In many cases there are municipal social workers who lack any knowledge about anything, not only about if such needs really exist, but also about these minors and their living conditions, real ages, ambitions and so on.

This is however not entirely true. Some municipal social workers say that they know about what is going on in this 'business', but that they cannot do anything about it since they lack routines for this. Lisa puts it in this way:

I know that some private 'family-homes' often make deals with a group of URMs who are from the same country as them, 'if you come and live with me, I will give you money, I will live my life and you can live your life as you please'. Why would the youths reject this offer? I know that this has occurred in a number of cities in Sweden. This is problematic, these 'staff from family-homes' only motive is money, but we do not know what to do.

Another municipal social worker, Mary, says:

There is a problem with private owned residential homes and private 'family-homes', when the financial gains are too great the quality is reduced. The municipal residential homes have also been able to make money for receiving URMs, so the quality is not too great there either. But, what can we do?

Bodil justifies the use of private owned companies due to the shortage of municipal 'family-homes' in Sweden:

Several of the minors wish to be placed in a family rather than a residential home, but since there is a lack of 'family-homes' we cannot place everyone in one. We prioritise the youngest minors when making 'family-home' placements. We often use contractors, private businesses for this since it is not easy to find families. Many private businesses are fighting to receive URMs, they make a lot of money.

One of the URMs has mentioned the problem of 'language' as a barrier to his integration in Sweden. He means that municipal social workers do not consider his ambitions for integration in Sweden and placed him among other

'Persian-speaking' URM in a 'family-home'. He says that he is very interested in education and integration in Swedish society, but that this is counteracted by him living in a 'family-home' with three other URMs, he revealed that the only language spoken at home was Persian and that no one was interested in practicing Swedish with him. Basar believes that he would learn better Swedish if he lived with native Swedes and says:

We only speak Persian here. It is one of the big challenges for us, because we are living in Sweden but it does not feel like it. I know that it is very important to learn the Swedish language. I want to learn it very soon. I have to be somewhere where there are more Swedish people to talk to, and to have contact with.

There are also other problems which counteract the integration of the URMs based on the lack of proper working routines among municipal social workers. Many of them lack the proper education and knowledge about what to do and how to do it. The lack of proper knowledge had become more visible in 2015 when immigration to Sweden increased dramatically. The municipal social workers state that they were unable to do a sufficient job during the autumn of 2015, which they describe as a period of absolute chaos. It was common for a caseworker to have between 30-40 cases simultaneously. Bodil describes her situation:

It was very hard, we just dealt with what was most important. It was as if we kept running faster and faster. We had a non-stop flow of new arrivals, thus we did not have time to do everything we should have done in each case. The workload was enormous, we had to make many evaluations. We did what was most urgent at the time, so there was a lot of practical work surrounding the URMs. It was very stressful. It has taken about a year to catch up on our work tasks.

Mary shares a similar experience when reflecting back on autumn of 2015:

We could not do our job appropriately, there was just no time for that. I had to work overtime but was still not able to finish everything. It was so stressful, really bad. Looking back on this period, I am surprised I managed. I know that a lot of people 'hit the wall', at least we managed.

Such a stressful situation together with the lack of clear political ambitions and working routines for municipal social workers, created a situation in which many URMs were placed in 'family-homes' and residential homes without further control of the consequences of such places for the integration

of URM. It seems that the need for solution to one problem, a home for the URM, has led to the creation of another problem, i.e. the problem of future integration of the URM into Swedish society. It appeared that municipal social workers lost their ability of acting in accordance to the best interests of the URM and society at large. The needs of the URM were overlooked. As Nicholas says:

Our contact with social authorities has been problematic because they are not doing their job. We document everything surrounding each individual and then share it with the social authorities so they can stay updated, but they do not have time to read the information. They have too many cases. When we participate in meetings, we notice that the caseworker has not read anything. This has a negative impact on the minor, because either the wrong decision is made by the social worker or the decision takes too long. For example, one minor was ready to move out but had to wait several months because his caseworker did not have time to finalise the decision. Another example is when a minor has to be replaced, due to a mental disability or drug addiction, and nothing happens because the social authorities are too busy with other cases. I think one single caseworker had around 40 cases at the same time.

He means that the URM in such a situation have nothing against to remain in 'family-homes' or residential homes since they are 'pretty comfortable with carers acting like their servants'. Many social workers working at residential homes uttered dissatisfaction with municipal social workers who were in charge of making major decisions about the URM. Cyrus, who have worked in several residential homes and even acted as 'family-home' staff illustrates such frustration:

It is very problematic when they do not listen to us carers, we spend time with them on a daily basis so we know more about them than their caseworkers. In this one case, it was apparent the minor had a learning disability; therefore, he made no progress, we tried to get him replaced to a residence more suited for his needs but the social authorities did nothing, they just said that everything would be fine if he learns to speak Swedish. Time passes and suddenly this minor is an adult and therefore have to move out and live on his own. Things are not exactly working out for him now. His situation would be better if they had listened to us in the beginning.

The problem of not listening to carers also had to do with municipal social workers' understanding of 'what the problem is'. The latter is highly

influenced by social authorities' lack of proper 'situated knowledge' and the misrecognitions of 'the privilege of partial knowledge' (Haraway, 1988), which carers and other actors who have more knowledge about the URM's have. This is even admitted by municipal social workers, such as Lisa who means that:

We [municipal] social workers have so much to do. You have no time to sit down and talk with the URM's in a proper way; you have to make very fast and urgent evaluations, there is no time for anything else.

Many carers and legal guardians mean that municipal social workers have no long-term plans and are just doing things on the daily basis. Blaming 'the time' or managerial barriers for professional mistakes has always been a part of the professional discourse used by social authorities in Sweden (Kamali & Jönsson, 2018a). As Gunnarsson (2009) argues, professional discourse is oriented to rationalise, defend and justify practice. This involves the various ways in which the social workers' accounts achieve specific actions such as blaming, justifying and excusing (Masocha, 2014). Although, municipal social workers in Sweden are not obliged to legitimise their decisions and is a closed organisation (Kamali, 2002, 2004) they sometimes become forced to consider the risk of becoming public agents when some of their failures become public in the media. This seems to have a severe, and in many cases, negative impact on municipal social workers' decisions concerning the URM's. Municipal social worker, Mary says:

We have many eyes directed on us. It is not only politicians who can put the responsibility of the consequences of their decisions on us, but also the media, they can make a case very large in the media and attack us for not being professional enough, or making the wrong decisions. We have to consider such things very carefully. Sometimes, for instance, you have to say no to the minor, but then you are afraid of becoming the subject of attacks from different people and parties.

As Saleh, 'staff from a family-home' and owner of a private company, says:

It seems that they [municipal social workers] are afraid of doing wrong, making a clear decision. They often make 'positive' decision for the URM's because it is easier to say yes than to say no and be subjected to a lot of shit from different actors, like, legal guardians, politicians, media, the URM's and so on.

Municipal social worker Bodil illustrate the managerial challenges:

They compare their own situation with other minors' situation, which makes this job so difficult. You are supposed to put the individual and his or her needs in focus, but if we treat the minors differently, they will find out. If I decide to grant one minor something, the next day I have 15 minors standing outside my office demanding the exact same thing. I learnt early on that you cannot treat them differently.

Although professional discourse is oriented to rationalise, defend and justify practice (Gunnarsson, 2009), professional competence should be at the heart of professional practice including legitimisation, certification and everyday evaluation (Atkinson, 2004). A study of Masocha (2014) concerning social workers working with asylum seekers in the UK shows that social workers' decisions and practices are justified and defended by social workers portraying themselves as not only having the best intentions, but also doing the best they can to help people in need. This adds also to the complexity and problems of integration of the URM in Sweden. Given the fact of existing racism and discrimination against people with immigrant backgrounds in the Swedish society and labour market (de los Reyes & Kamali, 2005; Kamali, 2009; Neergaard, 2006), the lack of information about and experiences of the reality of racism and discrimination can create more problems for the integration of the URM. Considering themselves as technical managers of the reception of the URM and not thinking of their future integration in a divided, segregated and discriminatory society, is a serious problem of the URM integration.

This is also partly because of the lack of a clear definition and understanding of integration in Sweden and lack of interconnections between actors, lack of an articulated political vision of integration and absence of systematic evaluations and long-term follow-ups of how the reception affects integration (Wimelius et.al, 2017). Research show that even the URM are critical of being denied their agency and being considered as 'unaccompanied' children in need of care and help (Herz & Lalander, 2017).

Summary

This chapter has been analysing the theme 'Swedish reception system's possibilities and shortcomings for integration of unaccompanied refugee minors'. Through analysing interviews conducted with carers at residential homes, municipal social workers, 'staff from family-homes', legal guardians and URM some major categories have been developed. The categories have been *'Schooling opportunities, contradictions of ambitions and realities'*, *'The*

Swedish generous allowance system and clientisation of unaccompanied refugee minors' and 'Social authorities' working routines'.

The results show that although huge resources provided by the Swedish welfare system, the way the reception of the URM is organised creates many problems for the future integration of the URM. The lack of an intersectional perspective by which to consider differences between and within the category of the URM has led to the existence of a homogenisation of the URM as a category of people with just one property, i.e. to be unaccompanied children. Socioeconomic, educational, age and gender differences are overlooked by social authorities. All URM are forced into the same schooling, despite the fact that many of them lack any experience of education. Many male URM say that they want to start working here and not go to school since they are older than Swedish pupils in the same class and that they lack the necessary knowledge-base for the success in their education in Sweden. Forcing such a group of URM to participate in schooling, do not lead to educational success. Besides, the role of school segregation and difficulties for pupils with immigrant background in the Swedish school system is also overlooked, which adds to the problems for the integration of the URM in the Swedish school system.

One of the findings of this chapter is the risk of clientisation of the URM in Sweden. Existence of a relatively generous welfare and allowance system, which does not put any demand on the URM obligations in return for the allowances, risks making the URM dependent on the welfare system. There are many indications for the development of a dependency lifestyle among the URM. According to the interviewed social workers and 'staff from family-homes' the majority of the URM are very aware of their rights and the ways of getting different allowances, but do not try to change their 'comfortable' lifestyles. There are no declared political ambition or policy for the integration of the URM in Sweden. Municipal social workers who have the major responsibilities for the placement and well-being of the URM in Sweden say that they have no responsibilities for the integration of the minors. They put the responsibility of the integration of the minors on the residential homes and the 'family-home' staff, who in their turn claim that they have not enough possibilities to do anything about the integration of the URM since the municipal social workers 'do not listen to them' and act in accordance with their own routines. The generous welfare allowances to the URM create a belief that 'it is going to be ok, anyway' and that they are going to make it in Sweden among the URM. This is the reason why many of them see no point of making any efforts to succeed in the schools (Wernersson, 2010).

Such a problem of integration is worsening because of the URMs' lack of adequate information about the 'real life' in a society which is highly segregated and discriminatory against people with immigrant backgrounds. The lack of primary experiences of racism and discrimination for the URMs and the generous allowance system run the risk of throwing non-prepared young people, who are almost unable to meet discriminatory practices (in their individual and institutional forms), into societal harmful relations and segregation.

Municipal social workers' working routines also create some barriers for seeing the differences between the URMs and act in accordance with the reality of lives of the minors. They lack what is called the 'situated knowledge' (Haraway, 1988), i.e. knowledge which includes the migration journey of the URMs, their ambitions, socioeconomic and educational backgrounds, among other realities which influence the lives of the URMs' here and now.

Chapter 7

Insufficient knowledge and skills in working with the unaccompanied refugee minors

Working with URM is an incredibly important task for social work in order to prepare them for a life in the new society. This is even more important since many of the URM have very distorted information about and attitudes towards the Swedish society, its welfare institutions and the processes of social cohesion. The majority of the participants, the municipal social workers, and those working at 'street level', i.e. carers in residential homes and 'staff from family-homes' have no specific education and training for working with URM. This can however be explained by the sudden increase of the influx of URM to Sweden during 2015. An important question in relation to the reception of URM is the question of integration in Swedish society. As discussed earlier in this work generally, and in Chapter 4 and Chapter 6, the increasing immigration of URM in 2015 created logistical problems for the Swedish reception system in general and for municipal social workers in particular. They had to find a secure place for a large number of URM and hire legal guardians for them in accordance with the Swedish welfare regulations. It was one of the reasons why the question of the URM's integration in Sweden was not considered properly. However, there are other reasons that should be considered. Sweden has a tradition of extensive child care which is called by some researchers as 'child-centred ideology' in the organisation of the welfare system (Kamali, 2004).

In addition, one of the consequences of the recent three decades' neoliberalisation of the Swedish society and its welfare state has been the concentration of the scarce welfare resources on 'child care' while other areas of the care system have been subjected to decreasing resources and showed problems related to a huge amount of work-load for social workers (Kamali & Jönsson, 2018a). The complexity of the status of URM and their living conditions prior to the entrance to Sweden and the reality of their living conditions in Sweden obliged social workers and the Swedish reception system to obtain adequate knowledge in order to be able to help the URM to a normal life in the Swedish society.

The analysis of the material presented in this chapter is based on interviews with URM, carers, municipal social workers, legal guardians and 'staff from family-homes'. This chapter examines whether social workers, carers and 'staff from family-homes' have proper knowledge necessary for the URM integration and future lives in Sweden. The theme 'Insufficient knowledge and skills in working with the unaccompanied refugee minors', was generated from the following categories: *'Knowledge about unaccompanied refugee minors' increasing migration and diversities*, *'Professional knowledge*

deficiencies about the unaccompanied refugee minors' and 'Lack of working methods, guidelines and follow-ups'.

Knowledge about unaccompanied refugee minors' increasing migration and diversities

The knowledge about the reasons behind the increasing migration of URM's have not been a focus of social work in Sweden. Almost all informants admit that they lack the adequate knowledge necessary for working with this group. They mean that they have found themselves in a situation that they have not been familiar with. They obtain a name, an age and a nationality, which is not always accurate. They mean that any form of background problems surfaces later on. Social workers say that their expectations to obtain better information and adequate knowledge about the URM's had not been realised because many URM's decline to inform municipal social workers of their backgrounds. As Lisa, a municipal social worker puts it:

We do not really know much about the URM's' reasons for seeking asylum. Many are originally from Afghanistan but have not been able to stay there, so they have moved to Iran and lived there as undocumented refugees. Some have had their parents murdered because of their affiliation to regime critical organisations. I think the youths have been threatened, they cannot stay in their country. From my experience, the majority are pretty reserved about their background, they just briefly tell you about their family. It is not something they wish to talk about, especially if they have not received PUT. They have horrible memories so you have to respect that they do not want to talk about their past.

As discussed in Chapter 5, many carers and 'family-home' staff, who are in close relationship with the URM's, claim that many histories told by the URM's to the Migration Board, as well as to municipal social workers, are not true stories. This could be accurate since many of the URM's lack the reasons declared by Geneva Convention or/and the Swedish asylum laws. This is nothing new for the URM's or other asylum seekers in European countries, since obtaining a legal status as refugee is increasingly restricted. As Griffiths puts it:

In a world of increasingly restricted mobility, where recognition as a refugee is one of the few legitimate means for the financially or educationally poor to move, the 'genuine' refugee has become such a stylized and pure figure that it is near-impossible for individuals to meet the ideal. The combination of a high standard

of honesty and a presumption of suspicion, has serious implications, given that being branded a liar tends to not only affect the outcome of asylum claims, but the likelihood of being detained and the ability to obtain legal representation. (Griffiths, 2012: 8-10)

She means that deception, uncertainty and mistrust are as much characteristics of asylum seekers' perspective of the immigration system as of the reverse. This makes the ground for a 'mutual suspicious', as Griffiths calls it.

Another municipal social worker, Bodil explains such a 'mutual suspiciousness':

Far from everyone tells us about their reasons for asylum, and if they do, they do it after a long time, after they feel like they can trust you. They are always very careful. I do not pressure them in the beginning, but I do tell them that the most important thing is that they tell their reasons to the Migration Board.

Municipal social workers participating in this work, show that they lack adequate knowledge about the URM's living conditions and migration histories and in many cases focus on the 'truthfulness' of what they tell them. They mean that those who are from Afghanistan often say that it is a hard country to live in, the father is usually not in the picture, they have a mother and several younger siblings who are struggling to survive. Their only hope is their oldest son, so they send him off, hoping that he will be able to bring them to Sweden. Such a generalisation about the reasons why URM's leave their countries of origin and come to Sweden is risky and not applicable to all URM's; neither to them who have been interviewed in this work. As one of the URM's, Ahmad, says:

I have nobody of my [nuclear] family out there, not in Afghanistan, not in Iran, I am here on my own. Ok, I have cousins and two uncles and others, you know, but no dad, mother or brothers or sisters. I have to make it by myself and find a job and a way to live here in Sweden. I do not want to go back, I have nothing to go back to.

Even as one of the carers, Astrid, working in a residential home where many URM's are living, says:

There are girls, one of them was in this residential home four months ago, who did not want her family to come here, she was worried and said that she was not happy

of being forced to bring her family here. But I do not know how they succeeded to come here after she got a resident permit. She got sick after a few weeks and became hospitalised for serious mental illness.

What Astrid says indicates a difference between the will and ambitions of the URM^s concerning family reunion. This may be explained by gender differences of the URM^s, but this should not be exaggerated since there are other girls who had strong desires and plans of bringing their families to Sweden. One of them is Maryam, whose father was educated and had relatively good living conditions in Afghanistan, she says the following:

I count seconds, days to see my parents, I want them to come here, this bloody waiting and waiting is killing me. I know that my dad can get a good job here and my family can adjust themselves to Swedish society very well. We are not like others, many do not have educated parents. They wanted me to educate myself and get a prestigious job, a carrier, a better life. This was not possible in Afghanistan, not in Iran either, I hope to see them here soon.

The analysis of such material needs an intersectional perspective and theoretical tool. Many Swedish studies concerning immigrants as a group in general and immigrant women in particular erase the differences based on class, gender, age and ethnicity through homogenisation of such categories (de los Reyes & Mulinari, 2005; Kamali, 2002, 2009). Individualisation of social problems in a time of increasing neoliberalisation of the Swedish welfare state and social work help to ignore the wider structural inequalities which form the living conditions of people. The intersectional anti-categorical approach, which is based on a methodology that deconstructs analytical categories, such as women, considers the stabilisation of categories to be problematic in essentialising and reifying the social relations that the analyst may be seeking to change (McCall, 2005). This means that one should not consider female URM^s as a fixed category by which to explain the differences between for instance male and female Afghan URM^s. Instead of examining features such as ethnicity, class, and gender individually, intersectionality views the influence of these characteristics in an intersecting manner within specific contexts (Parker & Hefner, 2015). Therefore, understanding the inter-categorical differences is central for analysing the intersection of different features and their institutional and structural surroundings. There are many differences between the URM^s, both girls and boys, that have been considered in the analysis of the material in order to avoid ethnocentric biases.

As Ahmad and Bradby (2008) argue, the principle of the argument of homogeneity is rooted in the ideology of 'Whiteness' that is embedded in institutions and therefore disadvantage racialised groups. Such a biased homogenising of the URM's experiences of migration is brought up by Bodil, a municipal social worker, who generalise the experiences of a few URM's coming from different countries to all of them:

We know very little about their journey to Sweden. We are aware of that they might be victims of some kind of abuse, but that it is not easy to bring this up. It is typical for girls to have been raped, gang rapes are common. If they have not been abused themselves, they have seen their mom being raped.

Bodil's narrative may be true for some URM's, but not all. As Leyla says:

I do not know why everyone think that us girls have been beaten, raped, in our countries or during our journey to Sweden. The caseworkers, those here [carers], the family ['family-home'] want you to say this, that you have been abused, beaten and so on. This is not true, what more can I say? There may be others, but not me, or someone I know.

The municipal social workers, carers, legal guardians and 'staff from family-homes' admit that they do not have enough information and knowledge about the earlier experiences and living conditions of the URM's. Many say that they have to rely on what they hear from the minors and believe that to be true, although there may be many biases in the information they receive. The municipal social worker, Bodil, puts it in this way:

I have heard that smugglers sell them stories to tell the Swedish authorities, so I am aware of that we might get tricked every now and then, but it is not my job to determine what is true and what is not true. We have to listen to them and believe them during the moment they are talking.

According to the Swedish legal frames, municipal authorities and social workers are the ones who should have the most important information about the URM's in order to be able to provide suitable care for them which can help their personal health and development (SFS 2018:1894, §7 kap. 6). However, the carers and other people working with the URM's on a daily basis say that they have not received any necessary information for doing a good job with the minors. Joseph, a former carer and current manager for multiple residential homes says:

We do not know anything about the minor. We only receive information about their age, their temporary social security number, which country they are from and which language they speak. If they have information about relatives, we are also given this, but overall the information about the minor is very vague.

However, many carers say that they gradually learn important things about the URM^s they are working with, including internal differences between them, which is not only based on gender. Nicholas illustrates this in the following way:

Overtime you learn that those originating from Afghanistan are often Hazars with Shia-Muslim background, some are from mountainous villages in Afghanistan while some have spent most of their upbringing in urban areas in Iran. Eventually, when you have gotten to know some of them you also learn they have different ways of thinking. Afghans who have grown up in larger cities are more like typical youths, they have not had much responsibilities in their families, and you do not need to show them how to behave. Afghans who have grown up in small villages have worked since they were able to walk, basically. Afghans from cities are often more educated, some can speak English while those from villages might only have learnt a few verses in the Qur'an.

Such information could be used properly if the carers, legal guardians, 'staff from family-homes', schools and others working with the URM^s had an intersectional perspective which could be used to consider such inter-categorical differences (Crenshaw, 1991; Davis, 1981). Considering such differences between the URM^s is of crucial importance, in order to be able to target some problems among the minors and help them in their individual developments. This is not only important for those who are working with the minors, but also important for the minors themselves. As Basar, a minor living in a 'family-home' with three other URM^s, puts it:

I want to do other things, educate myself, go to university, be successful, I do not want to say bad things about my friends, others who are living here, but not everyone want to do as me. Many want to work, to earn their own money, maybe help their families, save money and so on, but not me. We are different, it is like this, I think she [municipal social worker] does not understand. They should give me more opportunity to be successful in my studies, I am educated, in Iran, I went to school and was good at that.

The 'staff from a family-home', Danesh, who is an educated person with a university degree, says that he is aware of the differences between the minors. Although he did not have an intersectional perspective, he demonstrates a very good understanding for inter-categorical differences between the URM. He is very critical of the municipal social workers' shortcomings and lack of knowledge about the minors. He means that the lack of adequate knowledge about the URM among municipal social workers, who have the major responsibility for the well-being and development of the URM, is an obstacle for him in his work with the URM. He means that:

Municipal social workers do not understand the complexity of working with the minors. They place them here or in the residential homes and pay the subsidy to us, but they do not really have any plans for the minors' life, problems and ambitions. I have a few boys living with me, they are very different. One of them is very clever person, everything goes well in the school and at home. He is even a support for the other boys living here. His family has no problem in Iran, it seems that he is coming from a good family. Another one hates going to school, he says 'why do I have to do that, I have never been to school in my homeland?'. Another one is just lazy and do not want to do anything, he is sleeping all day, does not help in the kitchen. Another one has huge psychological problems, I think he has ADHD or something that makes him uncontactable from time to time, it is difficult to have a constructive discussion or chat with him. He is very nice, but does not have his feet on the ground. When I discuss this with his municipal social worker, they do not care much about his problems. You have to be with him everywhere, for example, once he was alone at the city swimming hall and the police called me because he disturbed a girl and touched her under the water.

However, it should be noticed that the analysis of the material shows that some carers and legal guardians claim more detailed information about the URM in order to do a better job with them than some other carers and legal guardians. The carer, Joseph says that:

Important information that I would like to have concerns traumas. We do not know anything about psychological traumas until a minor start showing signs of this while living at the residential home. If we notice that they are not feeling well, psychologically, we have to replace them. Replacements can be avoided if we were to receive information about their mental health status.

Another carer, Martin, has a completely different understanding concerning the need of information, which should be provided by the municipal social workers, about the URM. He says that:

Personally, I do not need to know anything about them. I just need to know which country they are from so I know which interpreter to get. Then you have to assess the youth's needs in order to know what to work with. What does he know? Can he tell the time? Basic, everyday things. It is more fun to work with them using an open mind. You get these a-ha moments. Positive and negative, I am always learning something.

Martin see almost all the URM as a homogenous group with slightly different level of intelligence. He did not see the differences in class, gender, ethnicity, religion or educational background to be important in his work. This is a sign of ignorance which can hinder the suitable and targeted interventions which are necessary for many URM. As discussed earlier, according to Ahmad and Bradby (2008), such homogenisation of people with immigrant backgrounds is rooted in the ideology of 'whiteness' (e.g., Ahmed, 2007; Walby, Armstrong & Strid, 2012).

The knowledge base of professionals and people working with the URM is a fact that influence both the reception of the URM and their future lives in Sweden.

Professional knowledge deficiencies about the unaccompanied refugee minors

The interviewed carers have various levels of education and different forms of previous work experiences. None of them were educated in the field of social work. When the participants described the level of education among their colleagues at the residential homes, they revealed that merely a few of them had one or two colleagues with a degree in social work. All carers, except for one, considered having worked with Swedish youths, in any shape or form, as sufficient competence for working with URM, such as teachers, nurses and leisure-time pedagogues. Most of them also had the attitude that one did not need adequate education because working with URM is a 'learn-as-you-go' type of job.

Such pragmatic understanding of working with the URM is at risk of denying the necessary of knowledge in social work practices. Practice knowledge describes the way that theoretical and factual knowledge can be used to inform effective practices (Trevithick, 2008). There are many who are

working in the field of social work who lack adequate knowledge necessary for doing a good job with those in need of social work intervention. Practice knowledge, as knowledge for practice, has been conceptualised as the conversion of knowing-in-action to knowledge-in action (Schön, 1991). Practice knowledge means an interaction between what skills we need to use the academic knowledge effectively (Gambrell, 1997), i.e. the way theoretical knowledge is transformed and made relevant and useable. It has been long argued that the social work profession must take steps to bridge the research-practice gap, since social workers in direct practice have ethical responsibility to make use of empirical knowledge in their work with 'clients' (Barber, 1996; Reid, 1994). The tradition of critical thinking in social work, however, not only considers the ethical responsibilities of social workers, but also the inclusion of knowledge about structural and multiple inequalities which require an intersectional perspective in practice (Kamali, 2015; Krumer-Nevo & Komem, 2015; Walby, Armstrong & Strid, 2012).

Some of the carers believe that education is not necessary for what they are doing. Hasan, a carer who have worked with youths for more than five years says:

Education was needed, actually, for getting job there; social work training, social work education at university level. As an educated social worker, you also needed two years experiences of practical social work. I had no education though. Education cannot play such a big role, I have seen educated people, they get their high salary but they cannot do anything. On several occasions, the educated social workers could not handle the youths, so they called me and asked me to come to the residential home to help them, so we helped each other.

Some carers admit that there are many people with no education at all that works with URM's. The sudden increase of immigration of URM's during 2015 is given as a reason to why many without any, or very little, experience of and education in social work, obtain jobs in different residential homes or work as 'family-home' staff. As, Saleh, owner of a private company specialised in receiving URM's says:

We received many children [URM's] in the beginning. It was a chaotic situation for social authorities, they have to find a place, somewhere to live, for those children and youths. I had to hire people, anyone who I knew, it was not possible to hire educated people. There were not too many of them, if they had a social work education, they either had a job already or had started their own residential home for URM's. I had to hire people who I will not hire today; Yes, I admit, many were

not suitable for the job, they had many problems themselves and had no education at all, not even school education in some cases; but there was huge money to earn, who cared about education and experience.

Danesh, another 'staff from a family-home' and owner of a private company including several 'family-homes', says that there were even companies who hired criminals to work with URM.

I personally know many criminals, mentally ill, taxi drivers, bus drivers and illiterate people who saw their chances here to earn easy money. It was unbelievable, you could get up to 100.000 Swedish kronor for one single URM. People sold their taxi companies, rent out their pizza restaurants and started companies for receiving URM. There was no control of such people, many had criminal backgrounds, you have surely read that even MC-gangs started residential homes for URM.

Bodil, the municipal social worker, admit that there were not many controls made when they had to find a place for URM to live. She says:

We had no time to do such controls, you cannot imagine, sometimes we had to work to late afternoon to be able to find a place for the minors. Many times, it was enough for the residential homes to have one or a couple of people who had education or personal experience of social work, ok, even in some cases not exactly from the field of social work, but close areas.

Municipal social workers, as well as, the owners of companies placing the URM in 'family-homes' say that the only necessary papers they need to evaluate the competence of the 'family-home' staff, were a paper from the police and a paper from the Insurance Agency Board. These documents would show that the 'family-home' staff did not have a criminal record or problems with the Insurance Agency. Many 'family-home' staff, however, were among the unemployed and people depending on different allowances. As Armin, one of the carers, says:

Some, or if I put it more correctly, many of those accepting URM in their homes are people who without another source of income. Many are unemployed, sick, who gets money from the Insurance Agency Board, get money from Unemployment Insurance. Many receive money even from social authorities, different allowances; many had never had a job in this country and made their living by public allowances. They are not good for URM who have many strange

imaginations about Sweden, they think they can live on allowances their entire life, ok not everybody but at least some of them.

Even legal guardians have mentioned this as problem in the interviews. They meant that such 'staff from family-homes' are not 'good paragon' for URM and their future lives in Swedish society.

As discussed earlier, the problem of 'economic clientisation' based on long term dependency on social allowances in Sweden has been discussed (Kamali, 2004). Although the Swedish generous welfare state has been decreasing as a result of neoliberalisation of Swedish society, child care subsidies have not been influenced as much as other areas in the retreat of the welfare state from its traditional duties (Kamali & Jönsson, 2018a). The URM therefore entered a country with a relatively generous welfare state for children. URM received many advantages which in some cases were higher than their Swedish counterparts. As the 'staff from a family-home', Saleh, says:

My own children who are 16 and 17 years old and go to school receive about 1.150 Swedish kronor a month, but the URM who live with me receive almost 2.000 Swedish kronor. A few days ago, my son said 'dad, I think about leaving Sweden and come back as an URM so that I can receive more money'. My children, and even my friends who have children in the same ages, keep asking me why the URM receive more money than a normal young person in Sweden. What can I say? All I can say is that I just do not know. I think this is wrong, it creates hostility between youngsters and maybe even racism.

A carer, Karim, who works in a residential home, says:

They [URMs] are completely taken care of with silk gloves, they are spoiled, they think that everything is theirs, they want to wear designer clothes, designer shoes, expensive bikes, going to restaurants every day and so on. They even get angry if you say no, they cannot accept a no or a reasoning about their duties, it is all about their rights.

Since the municipal social workers are generously funding the residential homes or companies who hire 'family-homes', they demand a good care of such companies. However, the results show that there is not much control of the 'care' social authorities require from the carers, except 'good services'. As a carer, Martin, puts it:

The entire demand from municipal social workers is 'good service' to the URM, which means giving them more and more. They are very knowledgeable about their rights and what they can get from us or social authorities, but nothing about their duties.

This is mainly due to municipal social workers' shortcomings of knowledge about the future life of the URM and the lack of adequate routines and methods in working with the URM. The generous welfare subsidies can corrupt their ambitions of becoming independent individuals in society.

The matter of cultural competency

One of the practical reasons, which is mentioned by many interviewees working with the URM, is 'language' and 'cultural competency'. They mean that since they have immigrant backgrounds themselves, they have cultural competency in working with URM. Reducing individuals to a diffuse concept of 'culture' by which some are placed in 'cultural boxes' which provide them a priori properties for action has been criticised by many researchers (Jönsson, 2013; Kamali, 2002, 2015;). However, interviewees among those working with URM, i.e. municipal social workers, carers and 'staff from family-homes', believe in 'cultural competency'. As Hasan, who used to work in a residential home, says:

You can call this job a 'foreign job'. I think that it is more so immigrants who can do this work. You come from the same culture, almost from the same situation. I have experienced war myself, during two years, and can understand exactly those young immigrants who have experienced war. Think, a person who has never been in war, who has not experienced such things, it is difficult then to understand that they [URM] have problems based on their earlier experiences, based on X and Y.

The social worker means that he as a person with immigrant background is better off working with the URM than a social worker with Swedish background. Earlier research (Kamali, 2002) shows that such an understanding of social work and the role of social workers' ethnicity in working with different groups are exaggerated and even in some cases counter-productive. Kamali's study (2002) shows that what is used to be called 'cultural competency' runs the risk of individualisation and culturalisation of social problems. It shows even that in contrast to the established imagination of the weight of 'cultural competency' in social work, 'clients' with immigrant backgrounds do not appreciate such a competency in many cases. Maryam's

answer to a question about the role of her 'family-home' staff's language and cultural competency for her life:

They are very nice, I have nothing against them, but I think that since I am living in Sweden it would be better to have a Swedish family, I could learn the language better, maybe get new Swedish friends; maybe it would even help me in my education, school, homework, I do not know, many things.

Another URM, Hossein, who has lived in a residential home is also criticising those with immigrant background and say that:

They [carers] say all the time that they know everything about Sweden, they share common experiences with us, can help us better than Swedes who work here, but they many times act badly, shouting at us, they think Sweden is like Iran or other countries that they come from. I am not saying that Swedes are better, but they know their country, they can help us, even municipal social workers listen more to Swedish carers than to immigrant carers.

This is also a problem which is addressed in Kamali (2002) which shows that many 'clients' with immigrant background prefer to have a municipal social worker with Swedish background because they believe that the latter can help them better in finding apartments and jobs. Considering the role of the established 'colonial discourse' in reproducing 'the West' and 'Westerners' as the norm of accepted conduct is part of the modern racist culture which even influenced many colonised subjects (Goldberg, 1993).

Many private companies who take care of the URM's have claimed their 'cultural competency' in order to convince municipal authorities to contract their companies for placing URM's in their 'family-homes' or residential homes. Danesh say:

It is important to tell the municipal social workers about our competency, not only competency in this area of work, but also our competency about the URM's' culture and language. It is important even for municipal authorities because they do not need to pay for the translator, we take care of this. They [the URM's] cannot lie to us, or cheat us, we know everything about them. It is not only this, they trust us too because we can communicate with them better than, for example, Swedes can do.

Although the employees of such companies have immigrant backgrounds, many of them have received courses to develop their 'cultural competency'.

As one of the employees in a residential-home with immigrant background, Amin, puts it:

Last week, we had some sort of education about different cultures, Swedish culture and other cultures, about how individuals with immigrant background see Sweden as a whole, also as culture, and how they are confronted with the Swedish culture. It was interesting, how the Swedish culture is and how immigrants see Swedish culture.

Many of such courses about 'cultural competency' are highly influenced by the fallacy of essentiality of cultures (Eliassi, 2015; Jönsson, 2013, Kamali, 2002). They use culture in singular forms based on simple generalisations of a group's or a nation's behaviours (Tomlinson, 1999). Such essentialist understanding of cultures leave no room for inter-categorical differences between groups, classes and nations (Crenshaw, 1991; Yuval-Davis, 2006; Walby, 2009). Such an understanding of 'cultural competency' and its policy consequences is based on cultural essentialism which according to Grillo (2003: 158) means:

A system of belief grounded in conception of human beings as 'cultural' (and under certain conditions territorial and national) subjects, I.e., bears of a culture, located within a bordered world, which defines them and differentiates them from others.

Such understanding of culture is called by Baumann (1999) as 'essentialist' and by Hann (2002) 'totalitarian' which stresses that the culture to which one is claimed to belong to constructs one's 'essence' and patterns of behaviours.

Although the concept of 'cultural competency' has a tradition even in the academic circles, in particular within anthropology and social work (Grillo, 2003; Kamali, 2002), it has been popularised and frequently used by carers and municipal social workers participated in this study.

The results show that educated social workers are more cautious when using the concept of 'cultural competency' than carers and other social workers without academic education in social work. The 'education' means training in 'cultural competency' for the less educated social workers. As Armin, a carer who works in a residential home for URM's says:

When I started working at this place, I did not believe that I needed it [education in cultural competency], but now after years of work, I believe absolutely that it would have been good if I had received it from the beginning. Because it is

important how you treat the youths, how you should behave towards them, and it is important to have a common model of action and that you act in accordance with such rules of action.

The educated social workers, on the other hand, and those responsible for residential homes, claim the need of more education in professional social work, and, when they mention education for the carers working for them, they mean professional education in social work. As Joseph, responsible for several residential homes puts it:

I would prefer to have employees with higher levels of education within social work. Definitely. The social work programme at the universities is so broad though. We have had skilled social workers but they do not have any knowledge about this field of work. Working as a carer involves a lot of case documentation, you have to be able to make thorough notations in an objective way. I have seen some horrible examples of this where people write about their own values and personal feelings. They are simply unable to write in a professional way. Some do not even know how they are supposed to document something without their own perspective on things, so I have spent time explaining this. We cannot just employ anyone. I know that we had a crisis during 2015 so we did not focus on a person's competency. Since we have a calmer situation, we have to go back to only employing people who are educated within this field. It is also frustrating for those who actually are competent, to work with colleagues who have zero knowledge.

The lack of professional knowledge among carers, municipal social workers and legal guardians working with the URM's has drawn less attention in the public debate compared to many other questions related to the living conditions of the URM's.

Lack of working methods, guidelines and follow-ups

Public funded social work, as any other public activities in need of development and improvement, need some kind of guidelines and follow-ups of its different working methods. The evaluation of social work with URM's needs good information about residential homes', 'staff from family-homes' and carers' working methods and knowledge about socioeconomic, political and administrative surroundings, which influence the URM's current living conditions and their possibilities for their future integration in Swedish society.

There is no clear control nor follow-ups of different actors who work with the URM's, such actors are the ones that can influence their living conditions.

As mentioned earlier, many 'staff from family-homes' lack necessary information about the URM as well as necessary education or experience about the Swedish labour market, political system and administrative system. Many are dependent on the Swedish social allowance system or the governmental Insurance Board. Although social authorities have the responsibility for the well-being of the URM placed in different 'family-homes' and residential homes, interviewees say that there is no systematic control of 'family-homes' or companies providing such a service.

The situation is not much better in residential homes and there seems to not exist any guidelines or documents on working methods. Each residential home has their own set of rules and different ways of working with URM. The carers describe leadership of the residential homes, as central but have experienced it as insufficient. This has led to vague and inconsistent guidelines, which may suddenly change from one moment to another. The lack of clear guidelines and future visions causes frustration among the carers. As Armin puts it:

The managers and head of unit are too concerned with small material details, they have no overall vision when it comes to our practical work. Which methods should we use? Where do we see ourselves in two years? Five years? How are we going to work with integration? There is none of that. Their main concern is preventing the police from showing up at the residential home.

He criticises the leading function of the residential home system. He sees the lack of political control of the entire question of the situation and reception of URM as a major problem:

We have a leadership that has no idea about what is going on here. The politicians who are in Domsala [a country centre] have never been to the residential homes in order to visit those who are living here. They are not interested in; where do they come from? what do they do? Nothing. They [URM] are not seen as individuals, they are a source of income.

Such a lack of a well-functioning leadership in many residential homes is stressed by other carers who mean that such a problem is harming the entire society and is not just a 'problem of today'. The carer who have worked in a residential home in a couple of years, Karim, says:

I am surprised that they, [municipal authorities] and politicians, did not show any interest. Ok, we have accepted and received these youths from different warzones.

What do they do? Are they satisfied here? Where does the money [given for the care of URM] go? Nothing. I do not want any appreciation for my work here, for someone to say 'you do a good job', but it is about human beings. They want to live here. They have emigrated from a country at war. We have accepted them here and must take care of them, otherwise it is better to tell them 'stay at home, where you come from'. These guys are the future, they must help to develop Sweden and pay for you and me when we get old. So, it is better to raise and educate them in a proper way. It is the responsibility of Sweden.

The feeling of distance to those in power and in charge of making decisions is another problem addressed by carers working in residential homes. This situation is not unique for private residential homes, but also in municipal residential homes. The lack of communication and adequate information and knowledge about the URM]s have, according to some interviewees, forced even the managers who were in charge of the municipal residential homes to quit their jobs. A carer, Nicholas', narrative about his experience regarding this concern is illustrating:

All of the municipal residential home managers that I have had, have quit. They had no knowledge about URM]s and they could not handle the pressure. The municipality opened more residential homes but the number of managers stayed the same. In addition, the managers' offices are no longer located at the residential home itself, so they have become more distanced from us, the URM]s and the carers, and they do not understand what is actually going on there.

He means that the managers have no direct connection with the employees, the carers, and have no ambitions or enough time to develop proper methods of working with the URM]s who are in need of professional help (Jönsson & Flem, 2018; Jönsson et al., 2017). Therefore, the entire social work with the URM]s is reduced and limited to 'details' and daily routines of living in a residential home:

The current carers are more focused on details, such as making sure that the lights are off by 10pm and making sure the URM]s are following the residential home's rules. Whereas when I was working, we had a supervisor who taught us methods to work which were based on theories, such as KASAM, she had a lot of knowledge and could explain why we are using a certain method when working. Those who do not comprehend why theories and methods are important, and why they should be implemented, they do things their own way, which causes irritation

among the working group. They let the minors bend the rules more. It is not good when colleagues deviate from the rules and do whatever they please.

Another carer, Martin, says that 'when there is no steering from above, or when the minors do not know what to do and do not listen to the carers, things can go very badly'. He means that there are many conflicts which could be prevented if there was a system of professionalism, routines, methods of work, control and evaluation of the carers work. This is often a reason behind a huge amount of mobility of carers working with URM. From the interviews it is apparent that it is a challenging field of work and many employers only stay for a short period of time. Carers must often rely on substitutes to do their work, which causes many problems both for the carers and for the URM who meet new persons almost every month. This even creates problem for the substitutes themselves. Elisabeth, one of the carers, illustrates the problem:

It is really difficult to work as a substitute, especially when there is a long period of time between working, because you need to be updated on everything that is going on. There is a lot to read, new working routines, they change them all the time and it is like everything is in progress. The residential home I work at has been opened for over a year and it is still under development.

The situation has been the same since the autumn of 2015 and the sudden increase of URM entering the country. As mentioned earlier, the social authorities' main priority was to create accommodation for the new arrivals. This included bending the rules and routines, such as receiving female URM in residential homes for males, and employing carers without the required competencies. As the carer, Nicholas, says:

We worked so hard during all of 2015, I could not make it and had to go on a sick leave. It was because of all the big changes forced upon us, we could get emails about having 24 hours to arrange accommodation for two more arrivals. Carers were burnt out and people quit. Almost every single time I came to work I met a new colleague or a substitute, thus I became their instructor. It was too much for me, and I also saw that it was not a good situation for the URM. I became sick and left the job by the end of 2015. I am capable of working now but I am still taking anti-depressants.

Many carers witness the lack of time and possibilities of communication between the employees and the employers, which made the situation almost unbearable for many. In many cases, when the pressured situation led to

direct conflicts between carers and the URM, the carers lacked proper engagement of the managers and communication with the employees in order to help develop routines and methods to prevent such conflicts and improve the working conditions in the residential homes. Elisabeth, a carer, presents the following illustration:

It was when I was threatened by an URM with a sharp object. We had a manager who was new; he did not contact me to hear my story about the accident and how I felt about the situation, but the youth was sent away and could not stay at the residential home. What you write in the report, you cannot write about your feelings and how you felt in the situation, but I think this will heavily influence how you evaluate the accident afterwards. I asked for a meeting with the manager, but there was no time [...]. There was no follow-up about how I felt or how the accident harmed me [...] I called him myself and told him how the situation played out and how I felt about everything, but that was the end of the story, nothing more.

Many carers and municipal social workers mean that there are major problems within their field of work, they blame such problems on the sudden increase of URM to Sweden in 2014 and especially 2015, and on the shortcomings of the residential homes and the 'staff from family-homes'. However, a few carers mention the need for 'follow-ups' of social work with URM. They mean that it is of great importance to conduct follow-ups or evaluations of the placements in 'family-homes' and residential homes, this makes it possible to discover and correct the shortcomings and solve the problems which the current system is generating. As the municipal social worker, Mary, says:

We are always learning, we are not used to this type of situation which takes up all of our time. I have to admit that we have no clue about where they come from and why they are here, of course, they tell us histories that we cannot verify, we have no education for working with such a client group. We need to make evaluations of our interventions. It is easy to be blind to our own flaws, not seeing our own mistakes and maybe even the many good things we have done. We need external eyes, those with knowledge who can see what we are doing right and what we are doing wrong. We do not have such a system right now, it may come in the future, but not right now.

The lack of a system of evaluation of social work interventions is of great importance for the development of methods in social work, which in the case of URM will influence their life for many years to come.

Summary

This chapter have examined whether municipal social workers, carers and 'staff from family-homes' have proper knowledge necessary for the URM's integration and future lives in Sweden. The major theme of this chapter, which has been 'Insufficient knowledge and skills in working with the unaccompanied refugee minors', was generated from the following categories: *'Knowledge about unaccompanied refugee minors' increasing migration and diversities*, *'Professional knowledge deficiencies about the unaccompanied refugee minors'* and *'Lack of working methods, guidelines and follow-ups'*. The chapter shows that municipal social workers have been faced with an unusual situation of a sudden increase in the number of URM's coming to Sweden and a responsibility for giving them a place to live and taking care of them. Social authorities have been forced to accept many 'companies' in the 'refugee market', who saw an opportunity to make a fortune in receiving URM's. According to the interviewees, many of such companies did not have competency whatsoever in working with refugees or URM's. Many of them placed URM's in 'family-homes' where the staff were not integrated in the Swedish society. By this I mean that they lacked a job or a position within the Swedish labour market. Many 'staff from family-homes' have been dependent on social welfare allowances or the Swedish Insurance Agency. Since many of the URM's chose Sweden as their final destination based upon its generous welfare system, their new life with people who are not integrated in the society risk reinforcing the 'right-based-thinking' of the URM's, which will not help them in their future life as active members of society.

The results show that municipal social workers do not have adequate knowledge about the URM's immigration journey, their ambitions, the constellation of the 'family-homes', their legal guardians, and the conditions the URM's' daily life at residential homes. Such lack of knowledge is not, however, limited to the municipal social workers, but it is also shared by other carers who ask for more education and guidance in their daily work with the URM's. High degree of mobility among carers has been another problem. Many carers complained about not being able to plan and work for a longer time with the URM's since they have to leave their jobs at the residential homes because of the workload and the lack of leadership and clear methods and guidelines. Carers, municipal social workers and a couple of 'staff from family-homes' see a reason for municipal authorities to do evaluations of such activities and interventions in order to map out the problems and find proper solutions.

Chapter 8

Administrating segregation in the name of humanist reception and integration

A neoliberal and postcolonial world order and global migration

Migration is not a new phenomenon in human history but a part of human condition, which during human history has formed civilisations and societies around the world. Thus, migration is not solely a process of changing the composition of population. Notwithstanding, a short time of human societies' dependency on agriculture and settlement, every human civilisation has been enriched by migration and influences from different people's migration and resettlement (Castles, 1989; Eisenstadt, 1987). However, such historical fact has been counteracted by colonial powers' suppression of colonised people and their monopoly over knowledge production (Eze, 1997; Ghosh, 1985; Goldberg, 1993; Kamali, 2009; Loomba, 2005).

Migration movements between nations and continents are influenced by historical and political relationships and economic dependencies deriving from the colonial past (Collier & Strain, 2014). Furthermore, migration is a result of the integration of local communities and national economies into global relationships (Castles, 2000). Modernisation and increasing mobility, colonialism, the postcolonial world order and the dominant neoliberal globalisation of today have created 'the age of migration', which have formed and forms both the periphery (former colonies and oppressed societies') and the centre (former colonial powers and imperialist countries') societies (Goldberg, 1993; Kamali, 2009; Wallerstein, 2000a). However, the monopoly over knowledge production have provided Western societies and privileged groups further instrument to continue their colonisation of the world; more through colonisation of the minds of people (Mohanty, 1984). The notion of periphery space entails the limitation in terms of access to power, to rights and to goods and services (Goldberg, 1993).

In the name of globalisation, Western countries have merged a Western-led model of a linear development by which to establish the superiority of European countries and their models of the nation-state and their intuitional patterns. Such a process and the necessity of capitalism have meant the pursuit for consuming products and the expansion of Western capital and control in other parts of the world (Heron, 2008; Wallerstein, 2000a, 2000b). The growth of capitalism on a global scale has always been accompanied by military force, violent removal of peoples, slaughtering of different groups and expansion of global capitalist system (Heron, 2008). War, violence and conflicts have been the integral part of globalisation of liberal and neoliberal capitalism. It continues along a line of thinking of knowledge, society and history, emphasising rationality, scientific objectivity, essentialism and the linear directions of time, thought and development; and operates in rigid

binaries of primitive-modern, black-white, man-woman, first world-third world, developed-underdeveloped and other contradictory categorisations. In this vein, the Western model of civilisation and/or development is put forward as the model to emulate and the basis upon which a developing country must accommodate its market(s), policies and populations in order to 'catch up' and follow the imagined singular model of Western modernity (Kamali, 2006b). Further, moving in linear progression from 'developing' to 'developed' is more likely to occur if one's economy is primarily directed to meet needs and interests of the web of global capitalist relations dominated by the 'developed countries'; this means meeting and serving the needs of 'developing countries' (Heron, 2008).

The world has since 1970s been witnessing one of the most crucial structural and institutional transformations ever, namely neoliberal globalisation as a consequence of globalisation of capitalism as a 'world system' (Wallerstein, 1974). The capitalist world system, to use Wallerstein's term, created proper grounds for globalisation of neoliberalism, which has led to the destruction of many societies' and local communities' structural and institutional arrangements. Such transformations and destructions of non-Western countries and local communities have forced and are forcing hundreds of millions to leave their places and move to large cities, neighbouring or 'Western' countries. As Kamali & Jönsson (2018a) argue, neoliberalism is today the established model of globalisation and presented as if 'there is no alternative' to life on the earth. Monopoly over the use of massive military force, control over global economy, including the control of IMF and the World Bank, have provided major Western countries, with the leadership of the US, many opportunities to influence non-Western countries' and societies' and their people's living conditions and development opportunities. Politically, neoliberalism follows the declarations of the former US President, Ronald Reagan's parole: 'Government is not the solution to our problem, government is the problem' (Reagan Foundation, 2019). This was the starting point of a global turn in considering the government as the organ for reducing socioeconomic gaps and providing social integration.

Neoliberal globalisation and its consequences, such as increasing wars, violence and the socioeconomic gaps between privileged and non-privileged groups and countries, have resulted in growing unrest and socioeconomic and political problems, which have forced millions of people to leave their societies and seek better living conditions or protection in other countries. Many are not even able to reach longer than their neighbouring countries. A very little group succeed to enter Western or European countries (Kamali,

2015; UNHCR, 2018). The past decade has experienced a substantial growth in the global population of forcibly displaced people. Currently, there are 68.5 million people forcibly displaced around the world, which is the highest figure in the post-World War II era. The affected individuals have fled their homes to seek protection elsewhere, either within their own country or across the borders. Approximately 16.2 million people were newly displaced during year 2017 as a result of conflict, persecution, generalised violence and human rights violations. The vast majority, 11.8 million people, were internally displaced while 4.4 million people sought protection outside the borders of their country, mostly in neighbouring countries. Furthermore, 1.7 million asylum claims were submitted during the same period with the United States being the largest recipient followed by Germany, Italy and Turkey (UNHCR, 2018).

In the postcolonial Europe, legal frames of asylum and migration policy act as an expression of a colonial relationship between authority and power. Ideologies of domination and subordination is part of the way migrants are treated in legal systems, political governing, economic and social practices of the societies they reside in (Collier & Strain, 2014). The intensity level of the contemporary migration creates major economic, social, cultural and political challenges. Such profound challenges require the involvement of political actors, i.e. the governments, to present migration as an opportunity for the emerging economies and not a phenomenon that should be criticised (Boghean, 2016).

The destructive consequences of neoliberalism are not only limited to non-Western and liberal Western countries. Neoliberal reorganisation of societies has also influenced the most developed welfare states, such as Nordic countries. During the last three decades, global neoliberalism has also changed the welfare states of Nordic countries, including Sweden (Kamali & Jönsson, 2018a). The most developed welfare state of Sweden has been reorganised in accordance with neoliberal managerial principals and models (see Jönsson, 2015, 2018; Lauri, 2018, among others). Neoliberalisation of many European countries, including Sweden, and the retreat of their welfare states have been among the major reasons behind the crucial changes in their democratic polity and the emergence of new racist and xenophobic parties (Kamali, 2009).

Many European countries have witnessed increasing popularity of racist, xenophobic and populist parties (RPP), which succeeded to gain substantial electoral support in recent decades' elections. Such parties succeeded to directly and indirectly influence the political decision-makings concerning immigration laws and integration regulations in those countries (Kamali, 2009;

Mouffe, 2005; Rydgren & van der Meiden, 2018). As a result, this has changed the relatively well-organised migration and integration policies of many European countries, including Sweden. However, the relatively strong political resistance to such parties in Sweden resulted in a kind of delay in such a development in the country. Both the right-wing coalition called the Alliance government (2006-2014) and the leftist Red-Green government (2014-2018) resisted cooperation with the RPP. This was the main reason for the consolidation of a relatively liberal immigration policy, which has formed Swedish migration laws and regulations since World War II. This has, however, changed since the sudden increase of immigration during 2015 and the entrance of 162.877 immigrants to Sweden. The change of the government's asylum and migration policies was partly influenced by the exceptional increase in popularity of the most influential racist and xenophobic party, Sweden Democrats (SD), in the country.

The increasing popularity of SD alarmed both the right-wing Alliance parties and the leftist Red-Green parties. As a result, they publicly uttered their concern for the loss of their popularity by saying that 'we have closed our eyes to the problems created by uncontrolled immigration'. However, the popularity and electoral success of SD was not only based on the sudden growth of the number of immigrants coming to the country, but also on how mainstream parties reacted to the discourse of the 'refugee crisis'. As discussed in Chapter 4, Fearing the increasing popular and electoral support for SD, many mainstream parties from both right-wing bloc and left-wing bloc adopted some of SD's anti-immigrant policies in order to hinder the move of their xenophobic supporters to SD or gain back SD's electorates. This is an established means used in European 'real politics' in a time of increasing racism and xenophobia (Bale, 2003; Kamali, 2009, 2015). Such a political change took place specially by changing the liberal migration policies of the mainstream parties and adopting a more restrictive immigration and integration policies. This was a political turn to ethno-nationalist propagated by the RPP (Rydgren & van der Meiden, 2018). Consequently, the political turn towards a more restrictive immigration policy started by early 2016 and continued ever since.

Political transformations of the Swedish liberal migration policies

Sweden has witnessed a steady growth in the number of migrants coming to the country over the last decades. In 2014 around 81.000 immigrants came to Sweden. In 2015 the number increased dramatically and about 162.000 immigrants, including about 35000 URM, entered the country.

Notwithstanding severe critics from SD and xenophobic as well as some right-wings parties and groups, the Swedish Red-Green government tried to stay with its relatively liberal immigration policies by asking other EU countries to receive a higher number of immigrants and reduce the 'Swedish burden'. However, such unsuccessful efforts of the government and increasing unrest against the government's liberal immigration policies, as well as the growth in SD's popularity, forced the government to introduce new legal measures to reduce immigration.

The Swedish government's first measure for reducing the number of migrants arriving into the country was the introduction of the controls at Sweden's southern intra-Schengen borders and identity-checks on all travellers crossing the border (Joyce, 2018). The new law entered into force on November 12th in 2015, resulting in the substantial decrease in the number of immigrants coming to Sweden. The other measure was the imposing of temporary residence permits and suspending family reunion for those receiving residence permit in the country (Joyce, 2018). On the 21st of June 2016, the Swedish Parliament adopted a new law that limited asylum seekers' possibilities of being granted residence permits and the possibility for the applicant's family to come to Sweden. The new law enacted on 20 July 2016 and will be valid for three years (SMB, 2018).

The political debate was changed dramatically since early 2016 and the majority of parties in the both right-wing and left-wing blocs adopted the SD's party program and anti-immigration discourse. The discourse of 'saving migrant children', women and immigrant families in need of protection changed and were gradually replaced by 'Sweden and Swedish people first' propagated by SD and other established parties. Such changes took place in a time of neoliberal reorganisation of the Swedish society including its welfare state, as mentioned earlier. Besides, increasing the costs of immigration and putting the responsibility of the reception on social authorities created major workloads for social authorities and municipal social workers who had the major responsibilities for the settlements of newcomers (Jönsson & Kojan, 2017). Although the government provided economic help to municipalities to take care of newcomers in general and URM in particular, social authorities adjusted their efforts to a neoliberal marketisation, through which many new actors interested in gaining economic advantages entered into a relatively uncontrolled migration and reception market. As discussed in Chapter 6 and 7 in this work, many of such companies were started by unserious actors, some of them with criminal backgrounds. They gained huge money without providing proper reception and care to new-comers and URM. The critics

against social authorities' shortcomings in working with URM in particular (see for instance Kamali, Aftonbladet, 2016), was not politically answered and social workers put the blame of the shortcomings mostly on the enormous work load and the limitations of their legal responsibilities. They acted, as they claimed, within the framework defined by laws, which practically meant that they had the responsibility to take care of those under the age of 18, i.e. children, and that the rest was the responsibility of politicians and other organs.

However, as a result of the new political restrictions put on immigration, the number of immigrants, including URM, coming to Sweden decreased substantially from 162.877 in 2015, to 28.939 in 2016, to 25.666 in 2017 and to 21.502 in 2018. The number of URM arriving in Sweden, which was 35.369 in 2015, decreased to 2.199 in 2016, to 1.336 in 2017 and to 944 in 2018.

Choosing Sweden as the final destination

One of the ambitions of this study was to find out why the URM choose Sweden as their final destination for their emigration journey. In answering the question, some background facts should be considered. When a country is subjected to war and conflicts, it is difficult to distinguish whether people are forced to flee because of personal persecution or due to the destruction of the economic and social infrastructure needed for everyday survival. Both political and economic motivations for migration are connected to the generalised and persistent violence that has resulted from swift processes of de-colonisation and globalisation under conditions determined by the privileged countries (Castles, 2000). As mentioned in the opening chapter of this work, many people in countries at war and conflicts, caused mainly by Western countries in order to maintain their socioeconomic and political privileges in the process of neoliberal globalisation, are forced to leave their countries and areas of origin in search of better living conditions. Afghanistan is one of those countries subjected to Western powers' violent policies forcing Afghanistan into decades of wars and conflicts, which forced many to leave the country and move to either neighbouring countries, such as Iran and Pakistan, or to emigrate to European countries. Sweden is one of the countries which received many URM from Afghanistan. As mentioned earlier, this work has been an empirical study to generate knowledge about the reasons for the URM's migration, choosing Sweden as the final destination and the way the reception system of Sweden functions.

This research shows that the selection among several alternatives of European countries is based on many factors considered by the URM.

Already in early period of modern migration studies, Ravenstein (1885) wrote about the reasons why people emigrate and their preferences for choosing their destination countries. Fafchamps and Shilpi (2008) have shown that migrants are concerned with their welfare in the destination country. This is true in relation to both internal migration in the same country and concerning international migration. Differences in economic opportunities give rise to strong migration incentives, across regions within countries, and across countries (Kennan & Walker, 2009). The fact that the colonial past and the postcolonial present of Europe have provided European countries with a higher level of welfare and socioeconomic development, makes them a desirable destination for millions of people who are forced to leave their countries and districts of origin and move to Europe in hope of a better life. As mentioned earlier, such moves have been intensified due to neoliberalisation of the world, which has led to increasing wars, violence and conflicts in non-western and former colonial countries (Kamali, 2015).

The URM participants in this study, mention the three most important reasons for choosing Sweden as their final destination: (1) the educational opportunities, (2) possibilities of family reunion and (3) the liberal Swedish asylum policy.

Afghanistan has been suffering from the consequences of the decades-long armed conflicts. It has severely limited young Afghans' future educational opportunities. The vast majority of the participating URM participants stated that access to educational opportunities, and the fact that education is free in Sweden, was one of the most essential factors when determining which European country to apply for asylum in. Many of the URM participants were already aware of the Swedish educational system and its advantages before beginning their emigration journey, while others received such information during their journey to and through Europe. Some revealed that they had previous experience of education, to some extent, while growing up in Afghanistan, but that it was limited to participating in Qur'an schools (religious schools). Furthermore, Afghanistan is portrayed as an unequal nation in regards to access to education and the URM participants who participated in this study mean that deprivation of education is especially common in rural areas. It is common for people residing in rural societies and small villages to participate in the more religious forms of education in Afghanistan and Pakistan. In Iran, it has been difficult to have access to education since many lacked the necessary residence permit or had to work in order to support their families. Occupation plays an essential role in their everyday life; it is financially beneficial to their family, but consequently, it leaves no room for education. The majority of

them had spent most of their upbringing working to support their families, which had only allowed them to attend school sporadically.

The lack of formal educational experiences for many URM's makes their re-entry into the educational system after resettlement, which typically involves catching up with the curriculum of lower grade levels before they enter ordinary education, very difficult and in many cases doomed to failure (i.e. Oppedal, Guribye & Kroger, 2017). Given the fact that many families in Afghanistan have difficulties to make their living under the condition of war and conflicts, every family member had to work and support the family. However, it is easier for the male members to work outside of their homes and add to the economy of the family compared to females. Females could at best work at home with, for instance, tailoring clothes. The role of boys in general and elder boys in particular is crucial for family survival. This is also one of the reasons behind why the male URM's are overrepresented among migrants to both neighbouring and European countries, including Sweden.

The strong solidarity within the family is a necessary condition of survival for many since there is no public social support and well-functioning society and the state is very weak in a country drawn into wars and violence for almost more than half a century. All of the URM's participating in this study say that they are going to bring their families to Sweden. This seems to be a 'secret mission' for many, since the emigration of the URM's to Sweden was approved by the family as a way to leave the harsh and unbearable living conditions in Afghanistan or in the neighbouring countries. The URM's see the family reunion as the second reason why they choose Sweden as the final destination for their emigration. This is understandable since the role of social network and the family in countries with low level of welfare state is much more important than in countries with the high level of welfare state (Durkheim, 1984; Kamali, 2004).

Although the family reunion is a very important reason behind the URM's choice of Sweden as the final destination, the reunion is not as desirable as it should be for all of the URM's participating in this study. Some of them, both boys and girls uttered different negative concerns in relation to the family reunion. Two girls say that there is a risk of increasing social control over their lives in Sweden since their families are used to exerting control over their children in general and over girls in particular. Further, the girls and two other boys mean that the arrival of their families means more concern and work for them because they have to take care of their families in an initial period. They call it an 'interruption' in their normalised and routinised lives in Sweden today. However, it is important to mention that the results show

that class belonging of both the boys and girls play an important role for their attitudes to family reunion. Two of the girls who belong to privileged families with good economy and social relations in Afghanistan and Iran say that they eagerly look forward to have their families in Sweden. They say that they have never been negatively controlled by their families and that their fathers have higher education and position in Afghanistan and Iran, which make them very 'liberal' in their attitudes towards their families and the position of girls.

The third decisive reason for the URM to choose Sweden as final destination is the Swedish liberal asylum policy and regulations. As mentioned earlier, Sweden had, up to 2015, one of the most liberal asylum laws in Europe and that is why so many URM and other immigrant groups migrated to Sweden. This is partly because of the relatively lesser influence of the RPP in the Swedish political system and established parties; as it was the case in many other European countries (Kamali, 2009). Both the right-wing and left-wing mainstream parties rejected any cooperation with the Swedish RPP, SD, until the post-election debate of 2018. The URM had received information about the Swedish liberal asylum laws from parents in their country of origin, from smugglers, or from other immigrants or their relatives who already resided in Sweden. The increasing restriction on immigration and changing of the Swedish liberal immigration laws and regulations played an important role in the reduction of the number of asylum-seekers in general and the URM in particular. Increasing popular support for SD has alarmed many mainstream parties to change their liberal position towards migration, as well as integration. The election of 2018 has showed a clear growth of electoral support for SD, which received more than 17 per cent of the votes and became the third largest party in Sweden.

Framing asylum status and sincerity

Choosing Sweden as the final destination did not mean that the URM did not adjust their asylum reasons to Swedish legal frames and patterns. They had to fulfil the preconditions for being entitled to receive residence permit in Sweden. The following four preconditions should be fulfilled in order to be sure of receiving acceptance and residence permit in the country: (1) they had to be forced to leave their country of origin, (2) they had to lack the protection of their parents, (3) they had to be child, i.e. not being older than 18 years old, and (4) they should not have been in another EU member state before coming to Sweden. However, and notwithstanding this requirement in accordance with Dublin Regulation, this legal frame was not followed by

Swedish government since many other EU countries rejected to accept URM's and other immigrants marching through Europe to Sweden.

The URM's coming to Sweden have to prove that they had been forced to leave their country of origin. Although many URM's participating in this study have said to me that they actually come from Iran, they had to convince migration authorities that they come from Afghanistan. This is mainly because Afghanistan is at war and not Iran; otherwise, they could lack one of the necessary conditions for receiving residence permit in Sweden. As mentioned earlier, war and conflicts can provide people who are suffering from wars and destruction possibility to receive protection in European countries, including Sweden in accordance with the Geneva Convention. Besides, URM's must even prove that they as children lack the protection of their parents and that they have no contact with their families who could provide them protection.

Protection of children is one of the most important declarations of the UN which force the member states to adjust their policies to the declaration and support children in need of protection (see the CRC, e.g., Article 2, 3, 6, 12 & 22). Besides, Sweden has a long tradition of supporting the welfare of children as one of the most important part of its welfare system since early 1930s, when social democratic party seized political power in Sweden. This strong child-centrism did not change much even in a time of neoliberal reorganisation of Swedish society since 1990s (Kamali & Jönsson, 2018a). As a result of the new public management policy in Sweden, the municipal social work has left many of its traditional structural and preventive social work practices and has to limit its scope to the 'legal requirements', which means doing the minimum level of intervention in accordance with laws and regulations (Jönsson, 2013; Lalander & Herz, 2018; Lauri, 2016). That is why the URM's should prove to be under the age of 18 in order to receive a proper and protective reception in Sweden.

All participants in this study excluding the URM's, i.e. the legal guardians, carers, 'staff from family-homes' parents and municipal social workers say that the URM's 'adjust' their stories to Swedish asylum laws in order to receive residence permit in Sweden. They say that the majority of the URM's come from Iran and not Afghanistan, have contact with their parents and families and many are not under the age of 18. Although, the discourse of the URM's 'lying' about their need of protection has been dominating the public debate exploited by the racist party SD since 2015, there is little or no concern about the reasons which forces people in need of protection to adjust their stories to a restrictive legal frame.

Swedish reception system and the integration of unaccompanied refugee minors

Although the Swedish Migration Board has the overall responsibility for the reception of immigrants, social authorities and municipal social workers are those who bear the operational responsibilities for new immigrants' settlements and daily lives. The role of municipal social workers becomes even more essential since the URM's are under the age of 18 and their welfare is the responsibility of social authorities. During the analysis of the interviews with the municipal social workers, 'staff from family-homes', carers, legal guardians and the URM's a number of alarming problems surfaced regarding the integration of URM's into the Swedish society. Despite huge resources provided by the Swedish welfare system, the way the reception of the URM's is organised generates many problems for the future integration of the URM's into Swedish society. The issues are related to the Swedish schooling system, social workers instigating 'clientisation' by creating and reinforcing a dependency lifestyle, social authorities' working routines and the lack of a critical intersectional perspective among professionals working with URM's on different levels.

It becomes evident that some carers make generalisations and distinctions between different groups of URM's depending on which gender and/or ethnicity they belong to. For instance, they mean that different 'nationalities' have different problems and demonstrate different attitudes towards school, thus either displaying willingness or unwillingness to integration. Such prejudice and simplified depiction conveyed by professionals is problematic as it runs the great risk of fuelling the unjust homogenous representation or URM's, which already exists in society (i.e. Stretmo, 2010; Wernersjö, 2014), and is likely to influence their work. Thus, it is important to stress that an individual's interest or disinterest in participating in school cannot be reduced to one's ethnicity or gender. There are various and complex reasons for why an individual's educational motivation is low or high; for example, one's socioeconomic background and previous educational experience influence such outcome. Such an understanding is often to be overlooked by social workers interviewed in this study; this seems to be a result of lack of knowledge about the URM's and their different situations. Ignoring differences between and within categories such as class, age, gender and ethnicity results in reducing the URM's as a category of people with solely one property, namely to be unaccompanied children. As Brubaker (2013) mentions, it is important to critically reflect on the constructed categories in use to represent 'others' in the public debate. Such categorisations influence

professionals in their daily work and are often based on institutional cultural repertoires which create publicly available categorisations and national stereotypes (Lamont, 1992).

A major consequence of reducing URM to a single category is that the Swedish reception system treats them as such, therefore all of the URM are forced into the same formal school system, despite the fact that many of them lack any educational experience. Several male URM express that their desire is to immediately start working in Sweden and not go to school since they are older than the Swedish pupils in the same class, and because they lack the necessary knowledge-base for the success in their education in Sweden. The fact that many male URM still remain responsible for their family's income in the country of origin often mean that the family heavily rely on remittances being sent to them. Some URM are also in need of money in order to pay for their migration journey. Thus, being able to work becomes more important than going to school. Forcing such a group of URM to participate in school, does not lead to educational success. Moreover, this also shows that displaying a negative attitude toward participating in the Swedish school system does not necessary mean that the URM are unwilling to participate in integration, as some are more interested in working. As McCall (2005) puts it, categorisation accentuates differences between categories, but is also instrumental in conflating or ignoring intra-categorical differences. This is what is happening in the case of the URM and the ignorance of the existing differences among them.

The way that the Swedish schooling for URM is organised creates also problem for the URM's integration as their interaction with Swedish pupils is very limited and, in some cases, even non-existing. The URM tend to spend most of their time in school learning and socialising with other URM or youths with similar immigrant background. It was uttered by the URM participating in this study that contact with Swedish youths in school could be helpful when trying to learn the Swedish language, as it is hard for the URM to practice a new language just amongst themselves. It should also be mentioned that the lack of contact with Swedish youths in schools often mirrors their situation outside of school. All of the professionals participating "in this study states that it is uncommon for URM to create and maintain relationships with Swedish youths, this is explained by various obstacles such as language barriers and 'cultural difference'. The perception of 'cultural differences' between people is often used in order to vindicate and explain many issues related to integration (Baianstovu, 2017; Eliassi, 2015; Gruber, 2016; Jönsson, 2013; Kamali, 2002; Kamali & Jönsson, 2018a; Lalander & Raoof,

2016). Even some of the participating URM had the same outlook on the matter, which is to be expected, since culturalisation of social problems are not only done by majority society agents, but also by people with immigrant background (Jönsson, 2013; Kamali, 2002).

Earlier research concerning integration of people with immigrant backgrounds in Sweden relates segregation and marginalisation to structural and institutional discrimination of people with immigrant background. The problem of 'culturalisation of the others' and 'otherisation' of people with immigrant backgrounds' in school curriculum have been considered as reasons behind dropouts and lower school results among students with immigrant background (de los Reyes, 2006; de los Reyes & Kamali, 2005; Kamali, 1999, 2006a, 2009). The role of already existed school segregation and the hardships for pupils with immigrant background in the Swedish school system is often disregarded, which in turn adds to the problems of URM school integration. It is important to mention that URM are not a homogenous category facing another homogenous category called 'Swedes'. There are many inter-categorical differences based on for instance class, ethnicity and gender which influence the success and none success of pupils in Swedish schools (Sawyer & Kamali, 2006). This means that the URM are not facing a school system of equal opportunity.

Although URM in Sweden have the possibilities to achieve and realise their dreams and ambitions for a better future, there are also structures that limit these possibilities, including taking responsibility for one's own life. Another finding of this study is the risk of 'clientisation' of URM. Although social authorities play an important role when it comes to the introduction of new immigrants in the Swedish society, their role in 'clientisation' of immigrants in Sweden has been criticised (Kamali, 2004). Sweden's relatively generous welfare and allowance system, in combination with almost not putting any demand on the URM obligations in return for the allowances, risks to make the URM dependent on the welfare system. Such a comprehensive welfare system negatively affects migrants' auto-reliance and self-initiative. Extensive dependency on the state as a 'care-taker' may lead to a situation of 'learned helplessness' (Lindbeck, 1986). The generous welfare allowances designed for the URM create a belief that 'it is going to be ok, anyway' and that they are going to make it in Sweden without making any efforts to succeed in the schools (Wernersson, 2010). Although the Swedish welfare system has been subjected to neoliberal changes during the last three decades and it retreated from its traditional duties towards citizens, it has still a relatively strong child protection system (Kamali & Jönsson, 2018a). This is

mainly due to the redefinition of social authorities' formal and legal duties. While social authorities are forced by the retreat of the welfare state to leave their 'preventive work', they are focused on their 'legal obligations', such as the protection of children (ibid). This is the reason behind a generous policy of reception of the URM.

There are many indications for the development of a dependently lifestyle among the URM. According to the interviewed carers, municipal social workers and 'staff from family-homes' the majority of the URM are very much aware of their rights and the ways of getting different allowances, and they do not make any efforts to change their 'comfortable' lifestyles. They state that the majority of the URM have a deeply skewed image of Sweden upon arrival. Many URM have the preconception that Sweden is a rich country, that Swedish people have a lot of money, and that the country can easily help them with everything. Furthermore, they regard this behaviour among URM as being reluctant to integration, as opposed to acknowledging the wider structures and the how they, as professionals, contributes to a system which creates and reinforces 'clientisation'. Moreover, there are also concerns about URM becoming too accustomed to the daily support surrounding them in residential homes and 'family-homes' because the adults are 'doing too much', which consequently prevents the URM from becoming independent and integrated. According to the experience of some carers and municipal social workers, the vast majority of URM require continued support from social services after turning 18 years old. Many URM's past responsibilities in their country of origin are very much intertwined with their current new life in Sweden. They feel a strong responsibility for their families' living conditions in the country of origin thus they try to help and bring them to Sweden.

Other dominant barriers, which creates problems for the integration of immigrants in Sweden, is the severe existence of structural discrimination, such as the political system's categorisation and public presentation of the URM as 'a problem' for the country, the educational system's homogenisation of the URM, and social authorities' West-centric understanding of being a child and forcing the URM into a homogenous category of being like 'everyone else'. The political representation and categorisation of the URM as a homogenous group, influence social authorities' perceptions and policies. For instance, since there is no declared political ambition or policy dedicated to the integration of URM in Sweden, social authorities believe that they have no obligations or duties of promoting integration of the URM into Swedish society. The results of this study show

that the interviewed municipal social workers do not have a clear understanding of the concept of integration. They put the responsibility of integration on the residential homes and the 'staff from family-homes', who in their turn claimed that they are unable to do anything about the URM's integration because the municipal social workers do not listen to them and only act in accordance with their own routines, which have nothing to do with the integration of the URMs. Another problem concerning the URMs' integration is the placement of them in inappropriate 'family-homes' and private owned residential homes. Although some 'family-homes' provide good care and have good intentions they might not be suitable as agents of integration. One of such concerns is the question of language. One of the URMs expressed that he was placed in a Persian-speaking 'family-home' with other URMs, who did not share his level of ambition, in terms of education and learning the Swedish language. He meant that this could lead to his isolation from Swedish society.

Many 'family-homes' and residential homes are interest-driven and even if municipal social workers are aware of such unserious private businesses, the use of them is justified as 'being the only option' in a time of the sudden increase of URMs. The lack of preparation prior to the 'refugee crisis of 2015' created a state of chaos which opted municipal social workers to place URMs wherever there was space, disregarding their individual needs. Such a stressful situation combined with the lack of clear political ambitions and working routines for social workers, created a situation in which many URMs were placed in 'family-homes' and residential homes without controlling consequences related to integration. Seemingly, the demand for a solution to one problem, i.e. a home for the URMs, has led to the creation of another problem, i.e. the problem of future integration of URMs into Swedish society. In addition, municipal authorities' working routines also creates some hinders for seeing the differences between the URMs. As mentioned earlier, they lack what is called the 'situated knowledge', i.e. knowledge which includes the migration journey of the URMs, their ambitions, socioeconomic and educational backgrounds, among other realities, which influence the URMs' current life situation.

Social workers' insufficient knowledge in working with the unaccompanied refugee minors

The sudden increase of the number of URMs arriving to Sweden in 2015 created many challenges for municipal social workers in finding accommodation for them. This led to the swift expansion of private

corporations and actors in the 'refugee market' who saw the opportunity to make huge economic profits by being private agents in the reception and endowment of the URM. Social authorities had very little time and opportunity to control such actors since their prime responsibility was to find housing for URM. However, up to the end of this study in late 2018, there was no clear control of different actors in such a 'private market'. According to the professional participants the majority of the private companies did not have any form of competency related to working with refugees, and even more specifically, with URM. In many cases, such companies placed URM in 'family-homes' where the staff themselves had not been integrated into the Swedish society, because many lacked a job or a position in the Swedish labour market, or were dependent on social welfare allowances or the Swedish Social Insurance Agency. Thus, the 'family-homes' undertook the task of caring for one or several URM as their only source of income. It should also be noted that some 'family-homes' have the URM's best interest in mind, but due to their marginalised position in society they are unable to assist the URM in their integration process. Since one of the reasons for choosing Sweden by the URM has been the Swedish generous welfare system, it can be argued that living with people who themselves are dependent on welfare subsidies cannot be positive for the URM's integration.

Even 'residential homes' were challenged by the increasing demand of place for URM. Since the situation was described as urgent many residential homes began bending the rules by employing carers who lacked social work education or experiences. This even mirrors the trait among the interviewed carers, although they had various levels of education and work experience, no one was educated within the field of social work. Further, the vast majority of them believed that one does not need an education in order to work with URM. Such a pragmatic understanding of working with URM is at risk of denying the necessary of knowledge in social work practices. Undermining the importance of social work knowledge also mean compromising the quality of work performed. Trevithick (2008) emphasises that practice knowledge describes the way that theoretical and factual knowledge can be used to inform effective practices. Gambrill (1997) highlights that practice knowledge means an interaction between what skills we need to use the academic knowledge effectively i.e. the way theoretical knowledge is transformed and made relevant and useable. For example, *the purpose* of an intersectional perspective in practice is to increase knowledge about multiple inequalities and the wider structural inequalities which form the living

conditions of people (Kamali, 2015; Krumer-Nevo & Komem, 2015; Walby, Armstrong & Strid, 2012).

Cultural competency

The high degree of mobility among carers at the residential homes has been another problem. Many carers who participated in this study criticised their work with the URM for only being focused on the 'here and now'. They complained about how their work situation prevented them from planning and conducting long-term social work with the URM. The heavy workload at the residential homes have forced many carers to quit their job; their decision to leave was often combined with the lack of leadership and clear work methods and guidelines. From the interviews with the carers it becomes evident that there exist no definable, nor specific, working methods at the residential homes. Each residential home has set up their own rules and different ways of working with the URM under their care. The carers describe leadership of the residential homes, as fundamental but have experienced it as insufficient. This has led to vague and inconsistent guidelines, which may suddenly change from one moment to another. The lack of clear guidelines and future visions causes frustration among the carers.

All of the municipal social workers and carers expressed that they were not able to do their job properly due to the workload and the constant flow of new arrivals. The majority of the carers also uttered that there was limited communication between them and the municipal social workers, which consequently put the URM's wellbeing at risk. Municipal social workers, carers and a couple of the 'family-home' staff see a reason for municipal authorities to conduct evaluations of leadership, work methods and interventions in order to map the problems and find proper solutions for them. Although such problems are often related to the sudden increase in the number of URM arriving in the country in 2015, the problem continued and is very much related to the lack of knowledge and methods guiding the work with URM. The lack of a critical intersectional perspective in a time of neoliberalism and its organisational frame, new public management, is often followed with 'putting the blame of shortcomings of the effective reception and integration of the URM on their 'differences' and traditional life styles. Municipal social workers claim the need for 'cultural competency' in working with the URM, who are 'otherised' and considered to be far from 'Swedish culture'. The lack of adequate postcolonial and intersectional knowledge makes the ground for leaving the main responsibility of the URM's integration to 'culturally competent persons', either among municipal social

workers or among the staff of private companies and organisations. Such an assumption culturalises social problems and forces individuals into unchangeable 'cultural boxes' (Jönsson, 2013; Kamali, 2002). This notwithstanding the fact that as Gilroy (1992: 3) puts it, culture should not be considered 'as an intrinsic property of ethnic particularity but as a mediating space between agents and structures in which their reciprocal dependency is created and secured'.

The doctrine of 'cultural competency' is also a reason for placing many URM in 'family-homes' with 'cultural competency', such as 'speaking the same language as the URM' and 'coming from the same country or region'. Although, this can provide the URM an initially good start in the new country, they say that this can hinder them of learning the new language properly. Another problem is what was mentioned earlier, i.e. the problem of integration. Many 'family-homes' with immigrant backgrounds are unemployed and dependent on social allowances and as such marginalised (Kamali, 2004). They are therefore not able of providing the URM with adequate information and knowledge about their rights and responsibilities in Sweden. Municipal social workers, carers and 'staff from family-homes' all claim the importance of 'cultural competency' in the reception and working with the URM and reduce social cohesion and integration into a defuse concept of 'culture' and cultural differences. Lack of knowledge about the intersection of the URM's family background, class, ethnicity, religion and religiosity, and other parameters as the process of their journey and the reason for choosing Sweden as their final destination causes municipal social workers and to some extent 'staff from family-homes', residential homes and the legal guardians to be lost in their daily activities.

Making 'culture' responsible and the only decisive variable behind URM's lack of integration makes any effort of integration of the URM deemed to failure. Cultural essentialist views and beliefs, in a time when globalisation has changed many societies, has created global cultural preferences and properties in almost all societies in the world (Beck, 2000; Featherstone, 1995; Giddens, 1992; Kamali, 2002, 2009; Tomlinson, 1999) which is a problem that should be addressed in social work. Forcing people in almost unchangeable cultural boxes is to deny centuries of globalisation which has created glocal societies, in which the global have become local and the local has been transformed to the global (Robertson, 1992).

The socioeconomic and political context of migration

Globalisation of market economy and the creation of a world system, in Wallerstein's theoretical approach (Wallerstein, 2000b) has been a result of colonialism and its racist ideology by which the colonised and non-Western people were considered inferior with essentially different 'races' and 'cultures'. The capitalist liberal economy of colonial countries, such as England and France, was globalised and through devastating colonial wars and occupations every corner of the globe was drawn into such a decisive global transformation (Austen, 2006; Gilroy, 1992; Goldberg, 1993; Kamali, 2015; Loomba, 2005; Mohanty, 2003; Wallerstein, 1974). Colonialism did not only change the world, but also restructured our cognition and the modern way of thinking about the world (Loomba, 2005; Mohanty, 2003). Colonised and non-Western people and countries have always considered and presented as non-developed and belonging to lower 'races' and cultures. This has been an inseparable part of the modern culture and its Enlightenment legacy (Eze, 1997; Goldberg, 1993; Kamali, 2009). The widespread ideas about the URM's belonging to traditional and non-modern cultures can be understandable if we consider the history of the modernity and modernisation of the world in accordance with dominating West-centric beliefs and blueprints of modernity. Centuries of colonialism and imperialist politics in Afghanistan are highly relevant for understanding the increasing migration of the people from Afghanistan to neighbouring countries and to Europe. In this study, municipal social workers, 'staff from family-homes', carers and legal guardians working with the URM's did not reflect upon such realities and complexities, which could help to increase and deepen their understandings of the realities surrounding the URM's and the context of their social work practices.

As mentioned in Chapter 1, the history of increasing emigration from Afghanistan goes back to the 1980s. Afghanistan was harmed by the cold war in general and by the US strategic policies of defeating Soviet Union during the reign of Ronald Reagan in the 1980s. The US trained Taliban in Pakistan, armed them and sent them to fight against pro Soviet government of Nor Muhammad Taraki. This was the starting point of a devastating civil war in the country which forced millions of people to flee and seek protection in neighbouring countries of Iran and Pakistan. Post September 11 events and the US-led military intervention in Afghanistan made the situation even worse and emigration from the unstable and conflictual country continued. The war in Afghanistan and its devastating consequences is a result of an aggressive neoliberalisation of the world since 1970s which has led to many

wars and conflicts in the world (Kamali, 2015). Continuation of war and conflicts in Afghanistan, which make the return of Afghan immigrants almost impossible, and the migrant Afghans' insecure and difficult living conditions in Iran and Pakistan have encouraged many Afghan youths to leave those countries for Europe in search of better living conditions. The exceptional situation in 2015 created opportunity for many Afghan youths to immigrate to those European countries with the most liberal immigration policies. Germany and Sweden were the two countries which still had a more liberal immigration policies for people under the age of 18. More than 33.000 unaccompanied children and youths came to Sweden during 2015.

The immigrants arrived in a country with a reputation of being one of the world's strongest welfare states. However, neoliberal policies did not only influence liberal and non-Western countries, but also Nordic countries. As a result, the Swedish welfare state, one of the most advanced and strong welfare states, started to change with the introduction of neoliberal changes in the early 1990s (Kamali & Jönsson, 2018a). This has led to increasing socioeconomic gaps and social problems in the country, which have also led to growing stigmatisation of immigrants and people with immigrant background. Increasing anti-immigrant sentiments resulted in appearance and electoral success of RPP, such as the Sweden Democrats, in the country (Kamali, 2009). The electoral success of the RPP caused many mainstream parties to adopt anti-immigrant policies of such parties. There were two reasons for such a change in the mainstream parties' policies and party programmes, i.e. (1) to stop their traditional electorates to leave their parties and vote for the RPP, and (2) to attract back those electorates who have already left such parties (Kamali, 2009). As a result, when they won the elections since the 1990s, the mainstream parties adopted more restrictive immigration and integration policies. This has also led to substantial changes in the welfare policies and weakening of the protection for vulnerable individuals and families (Kamali & Jönsson, 2018a).

Increasing the need for social work action for the protection of children and the arrival of thousands of immigrant children and youths took place in a time of neoliberal reorganisation of society and social work organisations in accordance with neoliberal ideology and New Public Management methods. One of the political paroles since the introduction of neoliberal policies in Sweden in the 1990s was that the welfare state and social work are too expensive for the state and many, in particular immigrants, are abusing the system (Kamali, 2004). The neoliberal policy of making the state or the welfare state cheaper became a part of popularisation of neoliberal policies and the

retreat of the welfare state. In addition, marketisation of the welfare state and privatisation of some parts of the welfare state's interventions resulted in the engagements of many private companies in providing welfare to vulnerable groups. The research shows that such changes not only fail to reduce the costs of the welfare state, but it increased its costs and made it more expensive (Kamali & Jönsson, 2018a). Such misdirected neoliberal and NPM conducts can be clearly observed in the practice of the reception of the URM's since 2015.

During the last years many private companies and actors popped up in the 'welfare market' in general and in the 'immigration market', in particular. Such highly profitable companies and actors receive the major part of the financial support for the URM's provided by social authorities. This means that the Swedish welfare state did not become cheaper, but even more expensive, the costs are not directed to the target groups for the costs. Private companies in the 'welfare market' and 'immigration market' are gaining the most of the public welfare expenditures (Kamali & Jönsson, 2018a). As discussed earlier in this work, the workloads forced municipal authorities to accept almost everyone with a registered company to be a 'provider of care' to URM's. Since 2015, there have been many reports in Swedish daily newspapers about problems related to inappropriate 'family-homes', carers and legal guardians.

Another problem related to the shortcoming of reception of the URM's in Sweden is the lack of interest or program for the URM's integration in Sweden. Although the almost chaotic situation in 2015 can be seen as a reason behind why social authorities did not pay attention to the question of integration of the URM's, the results show that the matter of the URM's' integration was not a priority area for social authorities even in 2016 and 2017. One of the main explanations for such a lack of interest for integration is that the neoliberal policies and marketisation of care leave no place for long-term programmes for integration and social cohesion. The retreat of the welfare state and domination of the market mentality in Sweden have reduced the matter of integration of both people with immigrant backgrounds and people with Swedish background in society to be a matter which can be solved by market forces. The traditional liberal imagination that the 'market solves all problems' have reappeared even much stronger in the neoliberal era. This means that less government is better for economic growth and integration. Such a political position which goes hand in hand with the increasing anti-immigrant sentiments and electoral success of the RPP have pushed the question of integration of people with immigrant background to the backyard of political debate. As a result, social policy and social work, which is mainly the

responsible of the government and social authorities in Sweden, are also influenced by the lack of political willingness for and interest in integration of the URM's in the country. Current neoliberal context and the problems of the retreat of the welfare state should be the major concern of social work education and practice.

Migration and future challenges for social work

Neoliberal globalisation has created a world in which socioeconomic, political and cultural gaps, which have resulted in wars, violence, ethnic and religious conflicts, climate change and environmental disasters are growing. Such a development has also forced many people to forced migration. Currently, about 40.000 people are becoming displaced on daily basis and forced to leave their countries and regions to seek security and better life chancer in other places. Majority of displaced persons move either to other parts of their own countries or to neighbouring countries. A relatively little group of migrants succeed to reach Europe. A large group of migrants reaching Europe are URM's who based on the believe in European laws and regulations on the protection of children have immigrated to Europe.

European countries' colonial past and imperialist present have provided them with better economic prosperity, social security and political stability; properties with often are lacking in the postcolonial non-Western countries. However, recent neoliberal development in Europe has also led to increasing xenophobia and racism in almost all European countries. Growing anti-immigrant sentiments and racism in European countries have resulted in substantial electoral success of racist and populist parties (RPP) in Europe with its destructive consequences for liberal immigration policies and integration of immigrants in European societies.

Although increasing xenophobia and racism harms many immigrants and people with immigrant backgrounds in Sweden, URM's are a most vulnerable group who risk to develop social problems and marginalisation. Many URM's have been on the move and have been living in neighbouring countries without access to education for a long time before arriving to Sweden. This study shows that although there are a few that are better off and have a relatively good educational background and coming from better off families either in their country of origin or in their neighbouring countries, a large number of the URM's lack educational background and risk to drop out of the Swedish 'normal' educational system. The problems of segregation, marginalisation and the lack of critical knowledge about the URM's' migration process and their 'obligations' towards their families who are still in other

countries, put social work's and social workers' intervention at risk of adding to the problems of the URM, rather than solving them.

Although the problems of settlement and introduction of the URM into Swedish society are many, which needs reorientation and use of new knowledge and new methods, the problems of the URM's integration are more severe and challenging. Based on the results of this study and critical literature in the field of global and critical social work, the following are some suggestions to make social work an effective instrument and a movement for promoting social justice, social cohesion and a better world for everyone irrespective of individuals' place of birth, nationality, class, ethnicity, gender, age and other categorisations which generate inequalities and discrimination:

1. New critical knowledge based on critical research
2. Increasing critical knowledge in the education of social work
3. Social work skills for working with transnational families and new global family formations and relations
4. New education for the URM
5. Educating teachers and carers, who are working with the URM, in critical knowledge and skills
6. Socio-political mobilisation against racism and xenophobia

Knowledge about, and understanding of, the world's colonial past and postcolonial and neoliberal present and their consequences is crucial for many researchers and educators of social work to educate future social workers equipped for meeting major challenges of our time. Social workers should be aware and have knowledge about the reasons behind structural inequalities in the world and the reasons behind forced migration. Knowledge about increasing wars, violence, ethnic and religious conflicts, climate change and the ways such phenomenon influence poor, rich, women, men, children, different nations and ethnic groups should be given a central role in the education of social work. This means that knowledge about intersections of categories of power must be an inseparable part of the education of social workers.

Swedish social work education is very much formed by the traditional and national social work education and services. This together with the influence of neoliberal ideology and the techniques of New Public Management makes it difficult to include critical knowledge into the curriculum of social work in Swedish universities. This remains a major challenge for researchers,

educators and critical social workers to counteract the neoliberal education, marketisation and commodification of social work practices.

Many migrants in general and the URM^s in particular have been separated from their families and in many cases family members are living in different countries. Some are living in their countries of origin or in neighbouring countries, others in different European countries. This makes knowledge and skills about transnational families and their living conditions and networking necessary for a change oriented social work, which aims at improving people's living conditions. Besides, this study shows that many of the URM^s have played a central role for their families' socioeconomic life in their countries of origin or in the neighbouring countries, such as Iran. Therefore, migration of the URM^s to Sweden has for many also been an 'economic journey', i.e. a way for the family to get a better socioeconomic position. Many of the URM^s feel obligated to send money back to their families during the time they are waiting for the residence permit. Those who receive their permanent residence permit are supposed to bring their families to Sweden as the 'end goal of their migration journey'.

Many URM^s did not receive any substantial education because of either war and violence in their countries of origin, or difficult socioeconomic conditions in their neighbouring countries. Therefore, there is a clash between the reality of the level of the URM^s education and the institutional requirements in Sweden. The belief that every child should go to school and finish their education is in many cases colliding with the needs and ambitions of many URM^s who lack the required educational background and have been working almost their entire lives. In this study, many URM^s say clearly that they do not want to go to school, where they feel themselves alienated, but are eager to start working in the normal labour market in Sweden. This makes organisation and creation of new 'educational paths', such as occupational educations and training, necessary in order to promote the URM^s integration in society.

The complexity of the URM^s 'migration journey' and their transnational realities make it necessary for the carers, municipal social workers, teachers and everyone else who work with the URM^s, to educate themselves and obtain adequate knowledge. As discussed earlier, many of those working with the URM^s, such as 'staff from family-homes', carers in residential homes and municipal social workers, lack necessary and critical knowledge about the reality of the URM^s living conditions, ambitions and dreams. Therefore, it should be a higher requirement of adequate knowledge and education for those working with the URM^s.

Sweden is witnessing a substantial increase in racism and discrimination in almost all areas of social life. The structural and institutional racism which has been a part of the power structure of society have not only been targeted and reduced since the governmental investigation of 2006 (SOU, 2006:79), but also reinforced because of the growing anti-immigrant and racist sentiments in the society. The electoral success of the racist and xenophobic party, SD, in the election of 2018, made it the third largest party in Sweden; just a few per cent behind the Social Democratic Party and the Moderate Party. SD's electoral success has not only directly influenced many regulations concerning immigration and integration of 'the others' in society, but also indirectly. The indirect influence of the SD on the Swedish mainstream parties has been an important reason behind the normalisation of the racist discourses and policies in the country. The fear of losing the xenophobic and racist votes encouraged many mainstream parties to adopt SD's anti-immigrant and xenophobic discourses. Such an important transformation in Swedish political life has also influenced the education, organisation and practices of social work; a change which makes critical knowledge and stance for mobilisation against racism and anti-immigrant sentiments more important than ever. This is perhaps one of the greatest challenges for a global and anti-racist social work based on global solidarity for the creation of a better world for everyone, irrespective of the place of birth, class, ethnicity, gender and other 'difference-creating' categorisations.

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