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Norway
Labour market integration of refugees – role of the PES, Malmø, June 2016

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the norwegian way
Current refugee situation in Norway

- 31 145 refugees arrived in Norway in 2015
- 5 297 unaccompanied minors
- Estimated numbers of arrivals in 2016: ca 35 000 persons

Integration process for refugees in Norway:
Introduction programme

- Based on the introduction Act, amended in 2005
- The right and obligation to participate in an introduction programme applies to newly arrived foreign nationals between 18 and 55 years of age
- The municipality's responsibilities
- The content of the programme
- Participation triggers a right to introduction benefit
Introduction programme

- Main components of the introduction program:
  - Norwegian language tuition
  - Social studies in the immigrant’s native language (when feasible)
  - Measures to attain skills for labour market entry and measures to continue education

- PES involvement
  - Partnership between PES and the municipality
  - Refugees access to all labour market measures
  - Assistance in working with employers
Norwegian challenges

- The Norwegian welfare model is dependent on high participation in the labour market

- Refugees have a substantially lower employment rate than the average employment rate
Norwegian challenges

- Too much, too late:
  - extensive mapping leading to devaluation of skills and competences
  - red tape approach instead of a more tailormade approach bearing in mind the vast difference in the group of refugees
  - extensive language training without effect?
  - train and then place instead of place and train

- Result: refugees are pacified, lose motivation and does not enter the labour market
Need for a new approach

Firstly the government has passed significant tightening bills on immigration

- White paper on Integration (May 2016)
- White paper on PES (incl suggestions on more involvement and new approach on work integration of refugees) (May 2016)
New approach –
white paper on integration

Before settlement

- Integration-reception centres (pilotproject)
  - Reserved for people with a good working-potential
  - Self-registration of competences and skills
  - Career-guidance
  - 50 hours of language and culture skills needed for the labour-market
  - Vocational training in cooperation with local employers
  - All labour market measures available
New approach – white paper on integration

After settlement

- Fast-track in the established introduction programme
  - Mobilizing the social partners and the employers
  - Dedicating labour-market measures for this group
  - Aiming for a fast-track into self-employment
New approach – role of the PES

- PES has to come in early and collaborate with all actors in the integration process

- Labour market has to be the main area for training and inclusion of refugees into society

- Calls for labour market competence and experience in working with employers