



DRC and integration of refugees in Denmark

Policies and vulnerabilities

DRC DANISH
REFUGEE
COUNCIL

DRC



About DRC

DRC Dansk Flygtningehjælp

- Founded in 1956 – Hungarian refugees
- Largest Danish NGO with programs in 40 countries – emergency aid, protection, reconstruction etc.
- 8,000 employees
- In Denmark:
 - > Counselling of asylum applicants
 - > Integration
 - > Advocacy



DRC Integration (appr. 500 employees og 8,000 volunteers)

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Tolkeservice

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DRC's Integration Circle



- **A dignified life** as a vision for integration activities: Support and enable refugees and migrants to be part of a community and to enjoy equal rights and opportunities in Denmark.
- Language proficiency, employment, participation in civil society, and an inclusive society are pivotal for the quality of life, empowerment and future possibilities of refugees and migrants.
- Meeting the individual with a focus on resources.

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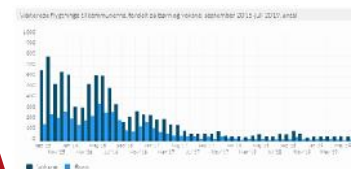
Integration of refugees in Denmark

Asylum applicants and refugees in DK

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Asylum applicants	6,148	7,557	14,792	21,316	6,266	3,500	3,523	2,716
Residence permits	2,583	3,889	6,104	10,849	7,494	2,750	1,652	1,777

	Nationality, asylum applicants	2015-2019
1	Syria	11,823
2	Afghanistan	3,887
3	Iran	3,565
4	Eritrea	3,533
5	Stateless	2,715
6	Iraq	2,373

In 2019:
 Syria
 Eritrea
 Stateless
 Somalia
 Morocco
 Iran



Trends in policy

- Many legal changes in recent years
- Fewer asylum applicants
- Focus on temporary stay and return
- Refugees via UN resettlement programme
- Focus on employment – early measures, IGU, women
- Restricted access to certain welfare benefits



The Danish Integration Act

- Quota system dispersing refugees to (almost) all municipalities
- “Self-support and return programme” for refugees – up to 5 years
- Responsibility of municipalities – individual plans



Entitlements:

- Affordable housing – temporary
- Free Danish language tuition (up to five years)
- Help finding employment
- Self-support and return benefit (low)
- Health care, mental and social care (trauma rehabilitation etc.)

Obligations – 37 hours per week:

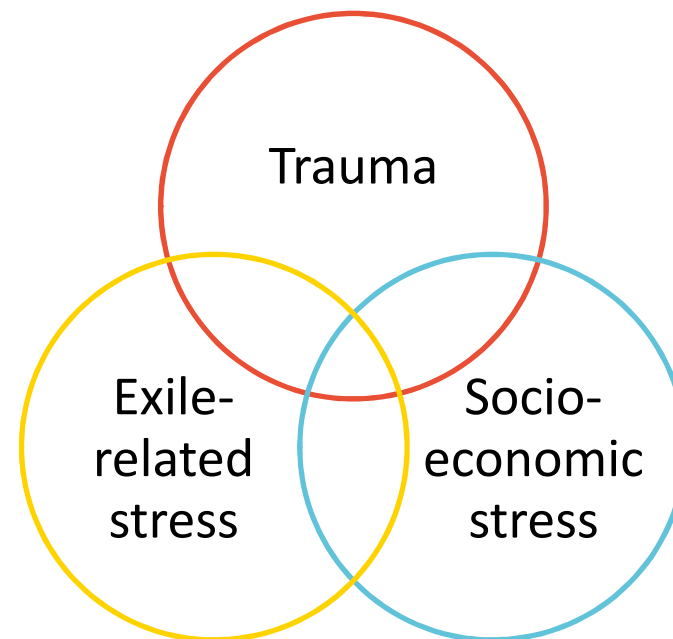
- Attend language training and pass test
- Actively participate in employment promoting schemes

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Intersecting vulnerabilities

Intersecting challenges



Refugees are shaken



- Extreme conditions and events
- Losses
- Fundamentally changed situation
- Cultural differences
- Minority
- Client

Why focus on refugees with trauma?

- 30-45 % of refugees have trauma-related symptoms (DK-estimate)
- 13-25 % of refugees in high-income countries have PTSD
- Employment rate in Denmark for refugees being treated for PTSD is below 10 %
- Refugees receiving treatment for PTSD (in DK) have, on average, lived in Denmark for 14½ years
- Measures to identify trauma are in need of improvement

Symptoms of trauma and PTSD

Invasive thoughts, feelings and images

- Flashbacks
- Nightmares

Avoidance behaviour

- Overly focus on job/studies
- Isolation
- Avoiding intimacy and social contact
- Avoiding sensory input and situations resembling traumatic experience

Constant state of alert

- Increased arousal
- Violent reactions to small changes
- Difficulty finding peace and concentrating



Conditions in exile are crucial

Risk factors:

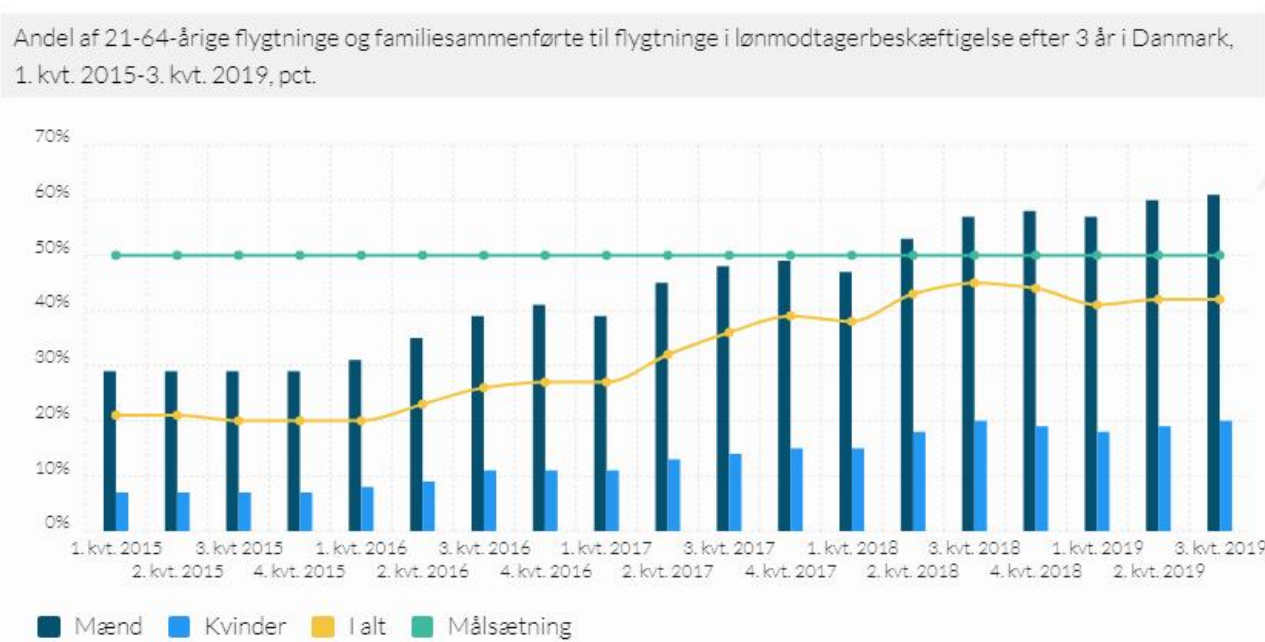
- Uncertainty about asylum and stay
- Separation from family
- Lack of network
- Low socio-economic status i exile
- Loss of status
- Language barriers
- Perceived discrimination

Protective factors:

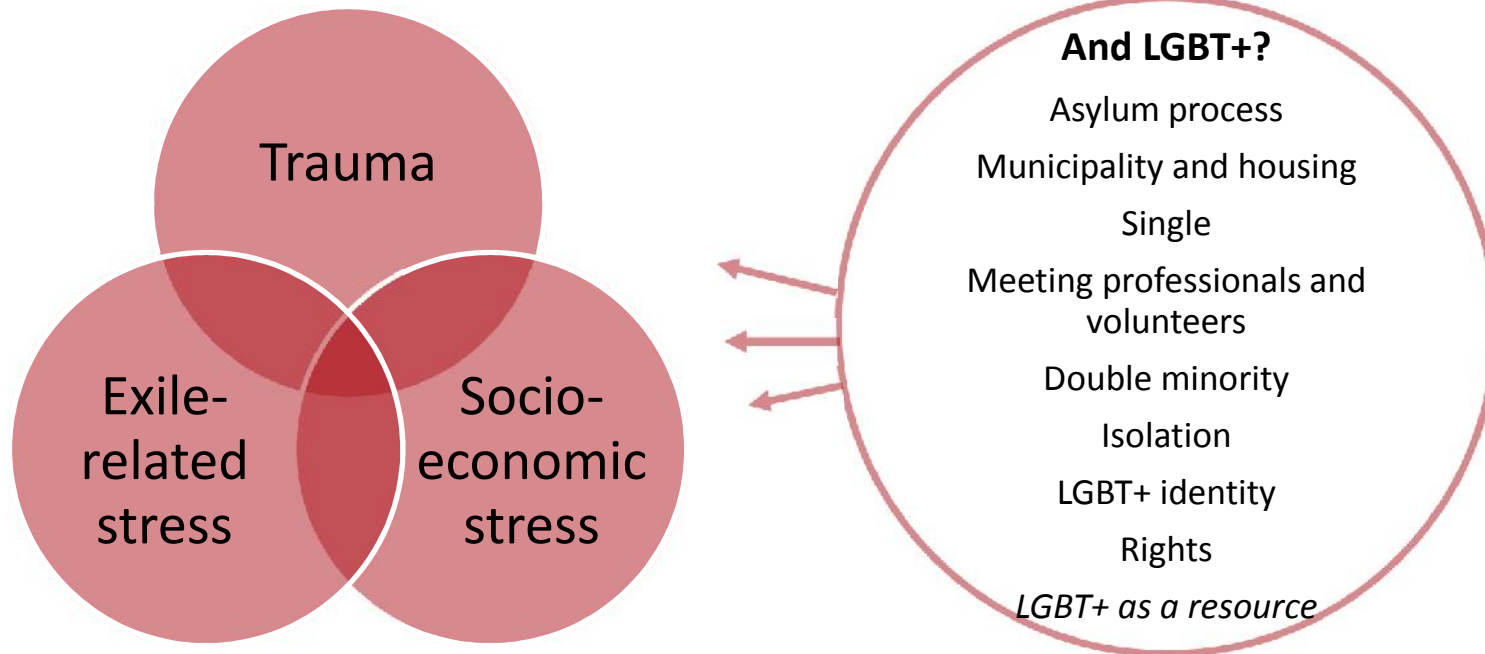
- Family reunification
- Social network
- Employment
- Language proficiency
- Permanent housing
- Access to health services

Source: Preserving and Improving the Mental Health of Refugees and Asylum Seekers, Umar Ikram and Karien Stronks for the Health Council of the Netherlands, 2016

Women with refugee status



LGBT+ refugees





Thank you!

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