

- **The Danish integration Act & different players and roles in the integration efforts**
- **family reunion and the road to citizenship**

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## The Danish set-up – The Integration Act

### General framework:

*Refugees are entitled to free school, education, healthcare, social services and most normal benefits + special regulation of efforts the first 3 years*

### > **The aim of the Integration Act:**

- > Starting point: the individual aliens own responsibility
- > participation in society on equal terms
- > self-supporting (job or other income)
- > understanding of basic norms and values in DK
- > promote that all parts of society can support the integration process

## The Integration Act

- > **The municipalities are responsible** for a 3 year integration programme for refugees and family (introduction programme for others)
  - > They can decide that other players perform part of the programme (buy services from private players)

### Where to live?

- > The Immigration Service decides which municipality new refugees go to
- > The refugee has to stay there for 3 years
- > The municipality has to provide housing (normal renting)

## The Integration Act

- > **Financial support**
  - > Cash benefits (if you follow the programme)
- > **The integration programme:**
  - > Free language tuition for 3 years
  - > Introduction to Danish culture and society
  - > Individual contract
  - > Employment promoting activities (job training, qualification improvement etc)
- > **Efter the first 3 years:** employment legislation and social legislation takes over if needed

## Integration: different players - different roles

- > Welfare-state model but long tradition of voluntary social work and in some areas the authorities put out to tender (private organisations/institutions))
- > Public economic support of voluntary work - both state and municipalities (incorporated in social legislation)
- > NGO- players in relation to quota refugees: The Danish Refugee Council, The Danish Red Cross, KIT (Integration Service of the Churches), Save the Children
- > DRC:
  - > professional services in cooperation with municipalities
  - > Civic society - network of local volunteers cooperating with municipalities
  - > advocay

## Partnerships (DRC as an example)?

- > National level: funding by the state, contract on activities and results on national scale
- > Local level: partnerships between DRC and municipalities
- > Cooperation with private companies
  - CSR: corporate social responsibility
- > Joined network with other NGO's in different projects
- > Cooperation with refugee communities, minority organisations etc.
  - > Ex: Håndtryk & Hetemalo (Danish-Bhutanese cultural association) and a local DRC-group in Haslev (Faxe kommune)

# DRC – professional services

1. **Integrationsnet - specialized integration services**
  - > Reception of refugees, activation, job creation, rehabilitation and psycho-social support
  - Municipalities outsource some of their specialized services to **Integrationsnet**
2. **Lærdansk - Language training centres**
  - > Language schools covering around 25 % of the national demand.
  - Municipalities are responsible and put out to tender
3. **Interpretation service**
  - 500 freelance interpreters service public and private sector with interpretation of minor and majority languages
4. **Research centre for traumatized refugees** (state funding)
5. **“Professionally” qualified voluntary advisory service** (state funding)

## ”Professional” volunteers: DRC voluntary advisory service

The **volunteers**: lawyers, social workers, psychologists and others

**Advice - issues:**

- > family reunification
- > prolonging of residence permits
- > obtaining permanent residence permit
- > social problems (social benefits etc) and housing
- > obtaining Danish citizenship
- > psycho- social difficulties
- > Divorce and other family problems
- > And variety of other subjects.....



## Family reunification and the road to permanent residence and Danish citizenship

- > Different national regulation, in Denmark comprehensive og tight regulation
  
- > **The "staircase" to full and equal citizenship in DK:**
  - > **Temporary residence permit →**
  - > **Permanent residence permit →**
  - > **Danish citizenship**

## Family reunification

Normal requirements –spouses (from May 15, 2012):

For both:

- > age at least 24
- > legitimate marriage according to Danish law
- > Connection requirement

For the spouse in DK:

- > permanent residence permit for at least 3 years and well integrated
- > Support yourself financially
- > Adequately accommodation at disposal
- > For the foreign spouse:
  - > Pass a language test after 6 months

## Family reunion and refugees

Spouses?

- > Exception from demands for refugees in continued risk

Children?

- > Parallel exception for refugees i.e. also children between 15 and 18

Other family members?

- > No.....

**BUT for newly arrived refugees**

- > difficult to understand the rules and make the application → **great need for guidance and advice**

## Obtaining Danish nationality?

Main conditions (to be changed):

- > 9 years residence, 8 for refugees or stateless
- > Permanent residence permit
- > Declarations
- > Renounce your former nationality (if possible)
- > No criminality
- > Passed Danish test on highest level
- > Passed citizenship test
- > Self-supporting (÷social benefits, self-supporting 4½ of last 5 years)
- > No overdue debt to public authorities

## Refugees and citizenship

The refugee position:

- > Refugees may have a formal nationality (home country) but can not enjoy it
- > Some refugees are stateless (ex. Bhutan)
- > The Danish requirements are high and there are limited possibility of exception from demands



**Need for guidance and advice**

**+ assistance (language training, preparing for test etc)**

## More information

The Danish Refugee Council:

<http://www.drc.dk/>

Information on legislation and statistics:

<http://www.nyidanmark.dk/da-dk>