



**A Handbook for members of the BAKOSSI Area Cultural and Development Association  
Finland (BACDAF), containing useful information for integration into Finnish society**

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#### Abstract

The purpose of this Development-based thesis was to create a guidebook for members of the Bakossi Area Cultural and Development Association Finland (BACDAF) containing useful and vital information for integration in Finland. The thesis was as well written in collaboration with BACDAF Finland. The reason for the guidebook was due to the constant challenges shared by members regarding integration into the Finnish society. Producing a guidebook and making it available to members and newcomers upon arrival in Finland, will broaden their knowledge on integration services and thus, assist in their integration path.

The theoretical framework of this thesis was to define, explain the meaning as well as differences of two central concepts namely integration and assimilation used in the context of incorporating migrants into new societies. Also, to use theories related to the concept of integration to describe those factors that are contributing to the successful integration of immigrants and to describe how integration work with immigrants is structured and organized in Finland. The role played by immigrant's associations towards integration was also discussed.

The method used in this Development based thesis was collecting information related on the concept of integration, conducting interviews as well as gathering reliable information from literature like research, laws and web pages containing information on integrating into Finnish society.

The findings of this thesis indicates that, migrants while in host countries easily face more greater risks of social exclusion than natives especially with respect to accessing education, employment, housing, health care and other social services. Migrants bring with them many educational qualifications as well as professional experiences from native countries. Recognizing these qualifications and utilizing migrant's skills and work experiences would be beneficial and will speed up quick access to aspects such as employment and education. Also, developing integration plans for immigrants that are based on their service needs would greatly reinforce the link between promotion of integration and working life.

Knowledge of the language of the host country is seen as a core element in integration. This is well documented and stressed in government policy in Finland for example where language skills are a very vital component to social interaction and finding employment opportunities. Taking into consideration that employment and networking are essential elements to build further language skills, failure to master the language of the host country can only make the path to integration more challenging and long. Therefore, an early development plan for sound language skills will greatly improve immigrant's integration as well as access to labor market opportunities.

Keywords: Integration, assimilation, migration

## Contents

1	Introduction .....	7
2	Background of the thesis .....	8
2.1	Development Thesis .....	8
2.2	Aims And Objectives of Thesis .....	9
2.3	Working Life Partner (BACDAF) .....	9
3	Theoretical framework .....	11
3.1	Assimilation .....	11
3.2	Integration .....	13
3.3	Integration services in Finland .....	15
3.4	Challenges to immigrant integration .....	19
3.5	Role played by immigrant associations towards integration .....	22
4	Implementation of the guidebook .....	24
4.1	Planning of the guidebook .....	24
5	Feedback and Evaluation.....	31
6	Reliability and ethics of the thesis .....	32
7	Conclusion and Discussion.....	32
8	References .....	35
	Figures .....	40
	Appendices .....	41

## 1 Introduction

The European Union (EU) has long been a destination for migration and will mostly likely remain a favorable destination for many migrants across the globe. Migrants come from all over the world, population growth in Africa, climate change, regional conflicts in the middle East as well as Africa and aspects of income differentials with countries are also a decisive push-factors that will continue to drive people to emigrate to the EU in the coming years (Cajvan 2020). This aspect of immigration brings with it assimilation and integration challenges in the host countries as many of the immigrants try to integrate and become a productive part of the new society.

In recent years, immigration to Finland has increased and become more diverse. It is therefore very important that the needs of immigrant population are as well considered in the organization and planning of public services and that immigrants are offered with activities and services that will help them integrate into Finnish society (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment Finland)

In Finland, the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment is charged with the integration of immigrants, integration legislation and the promotion of employment among immigrants. This has been strengthened with the provision of the Act on the promotion of immigrant integration. The purpose of the Act is to support and promote integration and make it easier for immigrants to play an active role in Finnish society as well promote gender equality, non-discrimination, and positive interaction between different population groups (finlex)

Despite governments' positive policy on integration, integration remains a two-way process. In the field of integration research, there is a consensus that holds this assertion. Numerous scholars explicitly endorse this notion by arguing that the attainment of integration does not only depend on the commitment, efforts and achievements of immigrants and their offspring but also the structure and openness of the receiving society (Klarenbeek 2021, p 902-921). A successful integration of immigrants builds communities that are stronger economically and more inclusive socially and culturally.

The integration of migrants into European countries will likely remain a pressing issue for years to come due to the diverse nature of most societies today. Many of these countries are confronted with vivid debates regarding immigrant integration into receiving societies.

According to the European Platform for Rehabilitation (EPR), migrants are likely to face much greater risks of social exclusion than most of the native population especially with respect to accessing employment, education, health as well as social services which form a

strong base for integration. In this regards, migrant populations require tailored and structured integration services, policies enacted by the state as well as positive attitudes of the receiving society that will assist them integrate and become part of the new society.

## 2 Background of the thesis

The phenomenon that is going to be developed in this thesis is the concept of integration with focus on Finland. Migrant integration is measured in terms of employment, education, health, social inclusion, and active citizenship in the hosting country (Eurostat). Successful integration of migrants in societies of the host country is imperative to maximizing the many benefits of legal migration and thus making the most of the contributions that immigrants can make to the country's development.

Integration of immigrants into Finnish society is quite structured, promoted, guided through a variety of service measures funded and organized by the state as well as other actors engaged in immigrant integration. This thesis will discuss the measures and policies put in place by the Finnish state through institutions to promote immigrant integration in Finland as well as how cultural associations like BACDAF play a major role with respect to integration of members into Finnish society.

Irrespective of government policy and support towards immigrant integration in Finland, there are other stumbling blocks which can hinder smooth integration of immigrants in society. In this Development thesis, I will discuss those aspects that can hinder the smooth integration of immigrants. As already mentioned, being considered a two-way process, both the efforts of the immigrants and the host country are all crucial and instrumental for a successful integration in Finland.

### 2.1 Development Thesis

There is no direct definition regarding what a development thesis is. According to Teemu, Katri, & Jarmoal (2022), this kind of development-oriented work can originate from different starting points such as an organization's development needs or desire to effect changes. It usually entails solving problems, generating new ideas as well as implementing them, and producing new practices, products, and services. The main objectives of a development-based thesis are to find a way to approach an active development task and improve a practice, as well as producing new knowledge that an organization may need for future development.



In a development-based thesis, there is no research question and research methodology, and is totally different from scientific research that requires certain traditional procedures to be followed. Instead in a development-based thesis, information is gotten from working life partner in the form of interviews, literature research, web pages linked with the phenomenon. In a development-based thesis, the final product such as a guidebook which will be produced for the working life partner is often described as having a process that includes, planning, implementation, and Evaluation. Therefore, with regards to the context of this thesis, the final product will be a guidebook for members of the Bakossi Area Cultural and Development Association Finland (BACDAF) based on their needs as well as relevant literature regarding vital information for successful integration in Finland

## 2.2 Aims And Objectives of Thesis

The aims and objectives of this thesis is to create a guidebook for members of the Bakossi Area Cultural and Development Association Finland (BACDAF) containing useful information regarding integration in Finland. The reason for creating this guidebook is due to the constant challenges shared by members of the association with respect to integration into the Finnish society. Moreover, the continuous decline in membership as members are moving away with their families from Finland to countries such as the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom to seek professional jobs that are in line with educational qualifications obtained from Universities in Finland.

Producing this guidebook and making it accessible to members as well as newcomers upon arrival in Finland will greatly enhance and aid in their integration process. Moving to a new country brings with it certain challenges with the principal one being integration. Despite the structures, legislation and government policy, there are usually other stumbling blocks regarding a clear path to integration that may result from the side of the system in place as well as the immigrants themselves. Cultural associations such as BACDAF also play a vital role in aiding and guiding integration of their members in Finland through activities and liaison with other Cameroonian associations in Finland.

## 2.3 Working Life Partner (BACDAF)

BACDAF Finland is a non-profit, cultural and development association founded and registered in June 2009 Helsinki Finland. The association does not have any employees, but it has an elected EXCO comprised of the president, vice, treasurer, and a secretary. It is dedicated to promoting the culture of the Bakossi people, academic, economic, and social empowerment amongst its members in Finland. The Bakossi people are a Bantu group that live in the Southwest English-speaking province as well as the French littoral province of Cameroon.

They number about 200,000 dwelling on the western and Easton slopes of mount Muanenguba and Kupe as well as some parts of the French mungo areas under the jurisdiction of the littoral province.

The Bakossi people are Christians with two predominant denominations namely Catholicism and Protestantism. However, the Bakossi people also believe and participate as well in cultural and traditional rights where respect is usually paid to ancestors through traditional ceremonies. The Bakossi people speak a local dialect known as the Akoose. It is one of the Bantu dialects with some slight similarities in pronunciation and meaning to other tribes in Cameroon. The Bakossi people are quite literate and very bilingual in nature, speaking both English and French that are national languages in Cameroon.

There is no written literature regarding the reasons why members of the association moved to Finland. However, by interviewing the president of the association as well as 2 other members, I found out that two principal motives namely education and family reunions are the reasons members moved here, this is explained in sub chapter 3.3 as background information. After obtaining bachelor's degrees from home Universities in Cameroon, some members wanted to continue studies at the master's level to gain international recognition as well as experience, as such Finland was a favourable destination due to its high standards of education and the free tuition during the last few years.

The second reason as already mentioned is family reunification. Most of the pioneer members who moved here earlier for studies, after graduation started doing odd jobs that were not in line with educational qualifications obtained in Finland but provided them legal status to reside here lawfully. Finland being a welfare state with strong support to families with children as well as all its citizens and residents, most members applied for residence permits for their spouses and wives based on family ties. As of 2009, membership was at 42 registered members, presently membership is 16 active members excluding children.

### 3 Theoretical framework

This chapter presents the theoretical framework on which this work is built on. To define and explain the differences of two central concepts namely integration and assimilation used in the context of incorporation of migrants into new societies. Also, to use theories of integration to better understand those elements that contribute to successful integration which will be used in producing the guidebook content. The theoretical part also focuses on integration in Finland which is the focus of this work. Literature such as research and information from government sources on integration in Finland was used to discuss how integration work with immigrants is structured and organized in Finland. The chapter also discusses aspects such as barriers to immigrant integration, background information from interview of 1-3 members of BACDAF regarding their personal opinions with respect to their integration in Finland. The role played by immigrant associations such as BACDAF is also discussed.

#### 3.1 Assimilation

In this chapter, I will define two central concepts namely integration and assimilation used in the context of incorporation of migrants into new societies. I will also explain the differences of the two concepts, but with integration as the central part of this study.

According to Migration Policy Institute (MPI), “immigrant integration is the process of economic mobility and social inclusion of newcomers and their children. As such, integration touches upon the institutions and mechanisms that promote development and growth within society, including early childhood care, elementary, post-secondary, and adult educations system, workforce development, health care, provision of government services to communities with linguistic diversity and more”. The subsequent paragraph will define the concept of assimilation.

Alba & Nee, (2003) referenced early American sociologists Robert and E.W. Burges widely known early definition of assimilation as “a process of interpenetration and fusion in which persons and groups acquire the memories, sentiments and attitudes of other persons and, by sharing their experience and history, are incorporated with them in a common cultural life”. To further understand these two concepts, their differences and similarities is explained below.

The difference between integration and assimilation with respect to incorporation of migrants into new societies is that integration involves structured aspects that incorporates immigrants and minority groups into society through aspects like education, labor market, health as well

as other social services (Schneider, Crul 2010). As such, there is the tendency to respect and accept the laws and regulations of the host country without the immigrants giving up on their own respective cultures and ways of life, which of course is different from assimilation which mainly seeks to eradicate the culture of immigrants. Furthermore, assimilation to a larger extent does not take into consideration the cultural aspects of immigrants or minority groups. Instead, focus is to bring immigrants into the mainstream of the host society. It is a kind of one-way process as the minority population is required to learn the customs and traditions of the host society giving up on their own culture or adjusting them to become acceptable to the majority community. On the other hand, integration is seen as a two-way process whereby the successful attainment of integration is not just the sole responsibility of the immigrants and their offspring but also the structure and involvement of the host society.

Based on the report by the Migration Policy Institute (MPI 2021), North America has traditionally relied on more assimilation-focused measures than Europe where integrationist approaches became more earlier partly due to the region's distinctive immigration and settlement histories. In north America, settler colonization narratives encouraged immigrants to assimilate to the dominant native culture. This was prominent during the so-called assimilation era in U.S. with aspects such as the "melting pot", in which people of different cultures melded together to lose existing characteristics and emerge with new national identity.

In Europe though, discussions with respect to assimilation were a bit more different as assimilation of immigrants was seen as more contingent on structural incorporation through labor market access and educational attainment in their host society. However, both in North America and Europe, integration practices evolved after the second world war and were implemented with broader government efforts to expand the social safety net and widen civil rights protection. Policies aimed to help immigrants adapt to their new environment by providing them access to employment, essential services such as health care and education.

Unlike the policy of assimilation, integration encourages immigrants to preserve their cultural identities. Host society's increased willingness and tolerance to adapt to demographic changes and the desire and belief in doing so would make societies more inclusive and stronger.

Having explained these two concepts the subsequent chapter, will discuss integration using relevant literature and theory related to the phenomenon. Interview from 1-3 members of the Bakossi Area Cultural and Development Association Finland (BACDAF), describe which factors are contributing to integration and how integration is structured and organized in Finland.

### 3.2 Integration

Based on the definition provided in this thesis and literature, integration depends upon the institutions and mechanisms that promote the personal development of immigrants aimed at participation in working life and society while preserving their respective languages and culture. In that regard, integration involves all legal institutions that promotes development and growth within the society, early childhood care, elementary, post-secondary and adult education system, workforce development, health care as well as the provision of other social services such as housing. A successful integration of immigrants builds communities that are stronger economically and more inclusive socially and culturally. As such, the final product which is a handbook for members of BACDAF will contain most vital and useful information on aspects like education, labor market, health care, housing as well as other social services that promotes the integration of immigrants into host societies.

To understand integration with regards to this work, the writer will focus on the theoretical framework by Ager and Strang (2008) which I consider suitable for this thesis. Integration plays an important part in developing and promoting policies and measures for immigrant integration, however though, note should be taken that the term is individualized as well as contested and contextual. The absence of a universally accepted definition means there is still debate on the concept integration (Ager & Strang 2008). The theoretical framework used for the thesis indicates four domains viewed as core to a successful integration: employment, housing, education, and health are taken to be “markers” or “indicators” of effective integration.

Firstly, markers and means are viewed as various critical and essential areas of the public sphere that indicate the successful integration of immigrants. They consist of the following four key elements namely employment, housing, education, and health. With consideration to the framework, full involvement, and participation of immigrants within these sectors indicate successful integration. It implies that immigrants can engage in work for their respective economic independence, find descent housing, gain sufficient support in aspects like good education, access healthcare and other social services that are integral in the integration process.

Secondly, social connections consist of three elements that are equally important social bridges, social bonds, and social links. These elements provide links between citizenship rights as well as other aspects already listed education, employment, and health. Ager & Strang (2008) see bridges as the link between immigrant community and other communities in the host country. The existence of links with others is indicative of successful integration. Social bonds also refer to networking amongst the immigrants themselves such as friends,

ethnicity or same tribes and religion. A complete absence or lack of such links signifies immigrants are not fully integrated in their new environment.

Thirdly, facilitators signify those aspects that facilitate and fosters the successful integration of immigrants into the host society. Ager and Strang (2008) identify two core domains, namely language and cultural knowledge. To integrate effectively, one of the most vital aspects is to learn to speak the language of the host country as well as achieving some level of cultural competence such as values and traditions of the host society. Failure and inability to speak the language impedes social interaction, economic integration as well as challenges in participating in civil society issues. Stability and safety here also refer immigrants and host community all feeling a sense of security and good level of social cohesion while living together and thus eliminates the feeling of the immigrant living in fear.

Fourthly, foundation encompasses the binding domain such as rights and citizenship. According to Ager and Strang (2008), though citizens' rights are still highly contested elements in measuring integration, they still form an important component in integration as they determine the immigrant's political participation in civil society activities. However, citizenship does not signify that an immigrant is fully integrated as some can still miss out on other areas of integration vital for own development. A common example in such a situation as such is an immigrant with citizenship may still struggle and face discrimination in aspects like employment.

Figure 1

A Conceptual framework defining core Domains of integration Alastair and Ager (2008)



Source: Ager, Alison Strang, Understanding Integration: A Conceptual framework, Journal of Refugee Studies, Volume 21, Issue 2, June 2008, pages 166-191

While aspects such as employment, housing, education, and health are central aspects of integration into a new society, these economic markers alongside socio-cultural factors also play a good role in integration. For example, in the EU, most member states strongly recognize the importance of basic values like democracy, equality of men and women as well as tolerance to be upheld by migrants. According to a report by (Han & Entzinger, 2003) benchmarking in integration, countries like Finland and Sweden including the UK, tend to emphasize on the importance for migrants to feel at home at the place where they live. By doing so, they as well acknowledge the migrant's right to retain their own cultural and religious background, and the need to make them aware that they have same rights as the population at large.

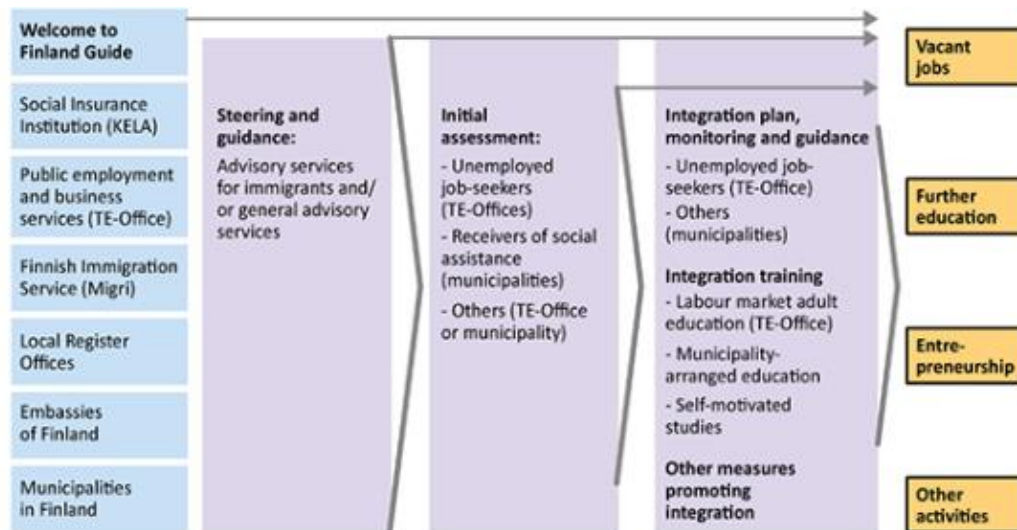
On the part of the European Union (EU), the conceptualization of integration during the last 25 years has been it's understanding of integration as a two-way process. In the field of integration research, there is a consensus that holds this assertion. Numerous scholars explicitly endorse this notion (Klarenbeek 2021; Han & Renske 2003; Sergio and Anais 2011) by arguing that, basically, that the attainment of integration does not solely depend on the commitments, efforts, and achievements of immigrants and their offspring but also the structure and openness of the receiving society.

The Council of Europe (2004) stressed that, socio-economic integration is perceived to be a great indicator of successful integration and it relates to the participation of immigrants in the labor market, and with factors that stimulate or hamper thus, such as education and language skills. Basic knowledge of the host society's language, history as well as institutions is indispensable to integration as it enables immigrants and in particular their descendants to be more successful and active participants in society. Access to public services and other social services such as health care and affordable housing should be on a basis equal to nationals and in a nondiscriminatory way is a critical step for better integration.

### 3.3 Integration services in Finland

In Finland for example, the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment is responsible for the integration of immigrants, integration legislation and promotion of employment among immigrants. The promotion of integration is thus built on legislation and government policy. Based on the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, integration of immigrants into Finnish society is promoted and supported through a wide range of measures and services provided by the authorities and other parties as seen from the table below. These measures are primarily provided as part of basic municipal services as well as employment and economic administration services.

Fig: 2 Services supporting individual migrant integration and organizations in charge in Finland.



Source: Empowering Migrants for Employment (EME) 2020

For integration to be successful, Finland enacted acts and principles on which the integration of immigrants is built on. For example, the 2010 Act on the promotion of immigrant integration (1386/2010) with main purpose to promote integration and make it easier for immigrants to play an active role in Finnish society. The purpose is as well to promote gender equality and non-discrimination and positive interaction between different population groups (finlex2010).

Furthermore, the integration of immigrants is also implemented with respect to the Non-discrimination Act (21/2004). Equality is a fundamental right in Finland, and guaranteeing it plays a key role in implementing integration as it prohibits all forms of discrimination based on gender, age, origin, nationality, language, religion, sexual orientation and many other (finlex 2004)

To foster integration and inclusion of migrants, Finland has a government integration program for 2016- 2019 developed during the former government. Its main thematic priorities include using migrants' cultural strengths to enhance Finland's innovation capacity, improving their participation in higher education, labor-market, and leisure activities, improving possibilities of obtaining Finnish or Swedish skill as well as improving language proficiency, and fighting against racism. The promotion of integration in Finland is a horizontal policy area that entails multiple sectors, the most central ones which are labor, education, housing, early childhood education and care, cultural, sports, youth, and social health policies (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment 2016, p 14-17).



In Finland, provisions on promoting integration of immigrant duties and rights as well as the authority's obligations and the coordination of measures are contained in the Act on the promotion of immigrant integration (1386/2010). The scope of this Act covers all individuals immigrating to Finland who have a valid residence permit as stipulated in the Aliens Act (301/2004) in Finland whose right of residence has been registered or to whom a residence permit card has been granted in compliance with the Aliens Act.

Promotion of immigrant integration is well structured and organized and involves the cooperation of different government agencies as shown in fig 2 above. The obligation to participate in multi-sectoral cooperation is as well laid down in the Act of the promotion of immigrant integration. Actors that take part in the cooperation include municipalities, Employment and Economic Development Offices (TE Offices), the police, organizations, associations as well as other entities. (kotoutuminen).

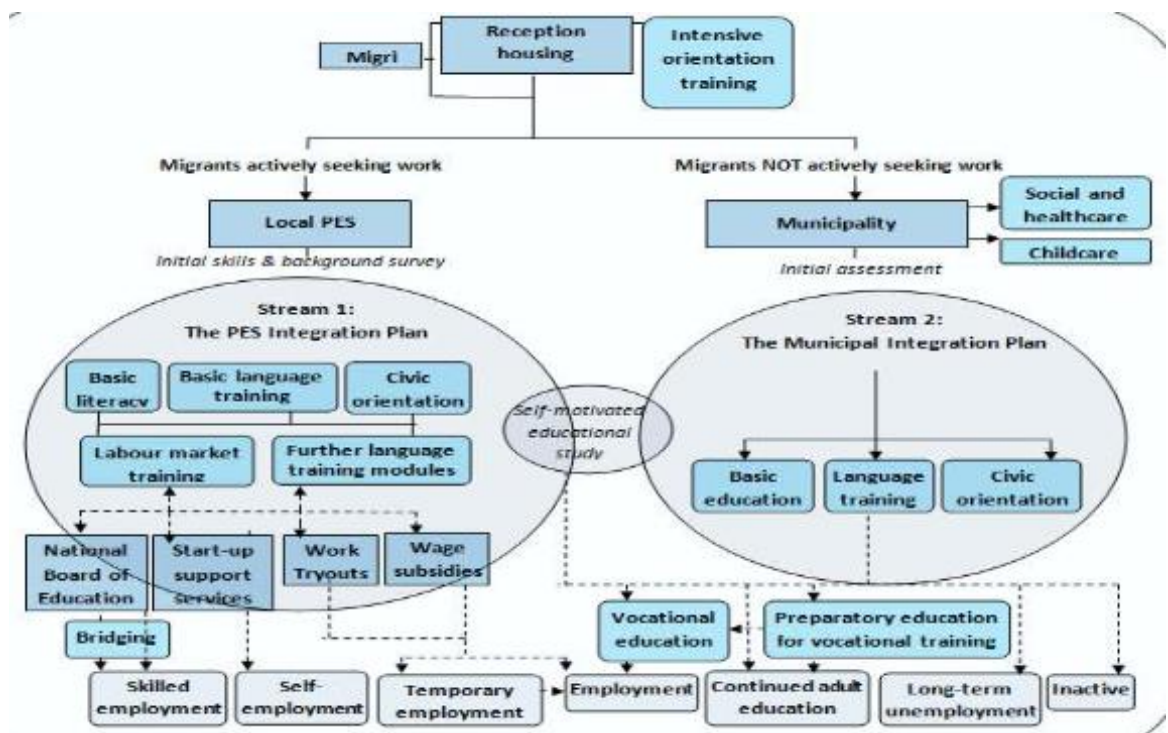
In Finland, the promotion of immigrant integration at the local level lies with the responsibility of the municipalities and Employment and Economic development offices (TE office). Under the act on the promotion of immigrant integration, municipalities and other local authorities are obliged to support and foster internationalization, gender equality and non -discrimination at local or regional level and promote positive interaction between different population groups. Meanwhile, regional state administrative agencies promote the realization of basic rights and legal protection, accessibility of health and social services. On the other hand, the government integration program sets out the goals for development at national level. With respect to the act on immigrant integration, the government prepares integration for four years at a time (kotoutuminen).

Furthermore, the monitoring, supervision and development of immigrant integration takes place at the regional level. Important actors here include the ELY centers, regional state administrative agencies and regional councils. The Centre for Economic Development, Transport, and the Environment (ELY) centers promote the smooth functioning of the labor market by making sure the necessary employment services are in place and available to all who need them. It is also responsible for developing and coordinating employment services as well as promoting employment opportunities and prevent discrimination and social exclusion by supporting the TE office in their regional role.

Based on the report by OECD (2018, PP 97-105), integration services in Finland are built upon three primary tools namely, the initial assessment, the integration plan, and training. The implementation of these three components is divided into two main streams. The first stream is targeted at migrants who are actively seeking work. This may include family migrants who are seeking work as well as free migrants from other EU countries seeking employment in Finland. Migrants who are not seeking employment at their time of arrival in Finland on the

other hand are referred to the municipality for their integration support. This plan which can be seen from the table below is drawn up at the TE Office if one is an unemployed jobseeker, the first residence permit or card was issued no more than 3 years ago or right of residence was registered no more than 3 years ago and the individual is able to participate full time in measures and services promoting integration and employment.

Fig: 3 The path of new arrivals through the integration plan in Finland to support integration in Finland. The plan includes studying Finnish or Swedish at a level that corresponds to an individual's skills and abilities.



Source: Working together: Skills and labor market integration of immigrants and their children in Finland OECD 2018

The journey to a successful integration in Finland usually begins with the initial assessment, the integration plan as well as training viewed as the pillars of integration. Immediately after migrating to Finland, the migrant receives basic information about the Finnish society and the possibilities for support. Information can also be accessed from Info Finland in different languages. Here, migrants receive information for support regarding integration process, and it is conducted by the Economic and Development Office (TE Office).

During the initial assessment, basic information regarding previous work history, education as well as language skills are collected as well as the service needs of the migrant are determined. The initial assessment is done for unemployed migrant job seekers, those on income support, and to individuals that applied for it. From the information gathered, the

need for a personal integration plan is estimated. Both the initial assessment and the integration plan are conducted by the local Employment and Economic Development Office (TE-office) or by the municipality. The integration entails huge amount of language training in Finnish or Swedish, labor market skills, society skills, mentoring as well as labor market training. Also, the Employment and Economic Development Office (TE Office), the Social Insurance Institution of Finland (Kela) or municipality will determine a migrant's right to receive unemployment benefit or income support for the time of the integration plan (Info Finland 2022).

Those that are inactive such as women with children especially, municipalities take upon the responsibility for drawing up training or self-motivated educational study. Moreover, placement can be offered to develop working skills while those entering independent study may enter vocationally oriented integration training, basic or upper-secondary education or preparatory classes (OECD 2018, P 101). The length of the integration plan varies from 3-5 years depending on certain special cases. With respect to co-ordination, a data base, koulusportti is available to share information between PES offices and educational institutions on placement test results, and labor market programs and educational courses undertaken.

According to the Migrant Policy index (MIPEX2020), Finland's comprehensive approach to integration places the country in the top 10 states. With regards to labor market mobility for example, Finland is ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> alongside Sweden. Finland is tackling long term challenge to create a fairer labor market with equal opportunities for newcomers. Non-EU-new comers are more likely in Finland than in most MIPEX countries to access adult education, professional training, and language courses. Finland continues to evaluate and improve its labor market policies, qualification recognition procedures and individual integration plan.

Moreover, Finland's inclusive approach to democracy encourages immigrant residents to participate in decisions that concern their daily lives. Newcomers enjoy basic political liberties and democratic inclusion in their town or region. It also offers a clear and stable path for most non-EU residents to enjoy long-term security and better socio-economic opportunities to participate in society. The path to permanent residence and nationality has been stable. Inclusive policies encourage migrants to stay long-term, settle down and secure better jobs (MIPEX 2020).

### 3.4 Challenges to immigrant integration

Despite government efforts and positive inclusive policies to foster the successful integration of migrants, the short history of migration to Finland compared to other major European countries and a few bottlenecks and inefficiencies in certain aspects in the current integration system poses a huge challenge to a smooth and successful integration. Integration being a phenomenon that encompasses all areas of society, from education, labor market,

health care to housing and other social determinants, the challenge to assess these services leads to negative repercussions such as unemployment and huge social divide in society and thus social cohesion becomes problematic. Interview from 1-3 BACDAF members are also some background information that as well explains certain sectors such as employment that many consider a huge barrier to integration especially as it is extremely difficult to gain employment based on educational qualifications obtained in Finland.

According to a report by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD 2017) there are aspects or shortcomings or key challenges in the design and implementation of integration policy in Finland that impedes a faster and smooth path to labor market opportunities as well as other aspects of integration. For example, there are certain difficulties among the actors and agencies working on integration. Lack of cooperation between government services, their dispersed locations, as well as diversity of procedures and communication channels creates a lack of clarity in the integration system. As such, the integration process can prove difficult to navigate for new arrivals who are not yet familiar with the system and must at the same time, overcome communication difficulties, as well as face long delays for the integration plan to be drawn up. As already mentioned, the following interviews are background information from three BACDAF members below (the President, Vice President, Financial Secretary) regarding their personal opinions on their integration in Finland.

- 1) The President: “I moved to Finland as a student, and currently living with my wife and kids. I am very satisfied with the family and healthcare services. But a bit disappointed that I can’t get work based on my academic qualification”. See appendix (1) for details.
- 2) The Vice President: “Moved to Finland as a Law student at Helsinki University. He is married, a father and grandfather. He, is very satisfied with the healthcare and social welfare, though haven’t had a job based on his academic background, he is currently satisfied with what he is doing”. See appendix (1) for details.
- 3) The Financial Secretary: “I moved to Finland as a student. Currently, I live with my husband and kids. I commend Finland for its healthcare system and good educational facilities. However, it is very challenging as a foreigner to find a job based on your educational qualification. Notwithstanding, we are constantly challenging ourselves to integrate into the Finnish society the best way we can”. See appendix (1) for details.

To add to the above, gaps in service provision are also a hindrance to integration. For example, the gap between the language level provided in integration training and the level required in education or labor market has led other providers to fill these gaps often through

project-based interventions. Such interventions can act as a vital source of knowledge regarding what works in integration policy and can as well lead to a complex and confusing landscape if used to address structural integration challenges.

Moreover, based on Botenbal et al., (2019, p 6-8), in their report titled Finnish Integration Policies as Barriers and Enablers to Migrant labor market integration, several labor market barriers were enumerated, these include aspects like for example, a lack of language skills, lack of recognition of qualifications, cultural differences, discrimination and lack of network. They also argued that a central part of the official integration policy in Finland is that integration training is offered mainly to unemployed migrants and while the integration process is unanimously agreed to have a positive effect on integration, there are shortcomings that affect integration. This is evident in a situation where already employed migrants are being completely left out of the official integration training services.

Another aspect identified in their report that as well impedes integration is the lack of recognition of migrant skills. On the one hand as well, migrants are thought to lack certain skills important for labor market integration. In the same light, migrants are identified as having various skills useful to Finnish enterprises. Qualifications obtained from native countries are viewed as essential assets, which, however, is usually underutilized due to lack of recognition or incompatibility with Finnish qualifications. In a nutshell, information about the value and compatibility of migrant skills and qualifications is seen as insufficient and at times inefficient.

A lack of language skills mostly Finnish but English as well is seen as a severe barrier to labor market integration. Although the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment emphasizes the importance of language skills, it also stresses that language requirements for certain jobs should be re-evaluated, and that no unnecessary requirement language requirement should be demanded. Despite this, Finnish language is not easy to master in a short space of time and even harder to grasp if one fails to attend a professional language course, sometimes even after completing a full-time language course, attaining a certain required level for education or certain jobs is hardly enough and thus limits access to labor market opportunities. This aspect is usually measured on monthly basis by Ministry of Economic Affairs employment statistics publication that gauges the employment situation of foreigners as can be seen from the table below during the month of October 2022 for example. The table clearly indicates the large number of unemployed men and women. Access to labor market opportunities is one of the main obstacles to integration as echoed as well by the members of BACDAF whom I interviewed.

Fig: 4 Foreigner's Employment Situation at the end of October 2022 and activities of Employment and Economic Development office during October.

I EMPLOYMENT SITUATION AT THE END OF MONTH	Oct-22	Oct-21	CHANGE NUMBER	CHANGE %
<b>A. JOBSEEKERS</b>				
1. Unemployed jobseekers	31 727	30 253	1 474	4,9
of whom fully laid off	1 593	2 734	-1 141	-41,7
2. On reduced working week	360	649	-289	-44,5
3. Those who have work	17 575	21 113	-3 538	-16,8
of which in full-time work	12 425	19 257	-6 832	-35,5
of which in part-time work	3 161	0	3 161	0,0
of whom employed through employment services	1 989	1 856	133	7,2
4. Persons outside the labour force	29 841	29 463	378	1,3
of whom in services promoting employment	2 790	2 583	207	8,0
of whom in training	24 958	24 547	411	1,7
<b>1-4 Total of jobseekers</b>	<b>79 503</b>	<b>81 478</b>	<b>-1 975</b>	<b>-2,4</b>
<b>C. PARTICIPATING IN SERVICES</b>				
1. Employed by the State	13	5	8	160,0
2. Employed by municipalities	617	474	143	30,2
3. Employed by the private sector	2 116	1 665	451	27,1
<b>1-3 Total number of employed people</b>	<b>2 746</b>	<b>2 144</b>	<b>602</b>	<b>28,1</b>
4. Labour market training	10 493	9 203	1 290	14,0
5. Training	175	115	60	52,2
6. Engaged in work/training trials	1 394	1 278	116	9,1
7. As a job alternation substitute	70	67	3	4,5
8. Rehabilitative work	1 246	1 216	30	2,5
9. Self-motivated studies supported by unemployment benefit	12 457	13 584	-1 127	-8,3
<b>1-9 Total number of people participating in services</b>	<b>28 581</b>	<b>27 607</b>	<b>974</b>	<b>3,5</b>
<b>D. STRUCTURE OF UNEMPLOYMENT</b>				
1. Unemployed women	16 225	14 838	1 387	9,3
2. Unemployed men	15 502	15 415	87	0,6
3. Under 25 years old	2 168	1 915	253	13,2
4. Over 50 years old	8 180	8 218	-38	-0,5
5. Unemployed over a year	8 745	10 462	-1 717	-16,4
<b>E. UNEMPLOYMENT SECURITY</b>				
1. Unemployed members of employees' unemployment funds	5 164	5 998	-834	-13,9
<b>II EMPLOYMENT SITUATION DURING THE MONTH</b>				
1. Unemployed jobseekers	38 549	34 320	2 229	6,5
2. Other jobseekers	46 094	49 846	-3 752	-7,5
<b>1-2 Total number of jobseekers</b>	<b>82 643</b>	<b>84 166</b>	<b>-1 523</b>	<b>-1,8</b>
4. Started spell of unemployment	5 503	4 239	1 264	29,8
5. Completed spell of unemployment	5 435	5 081	354	7,0
6. New jobs found through employment services	291	266	25	9,4
7. New entrants to labour market training	2 300	1 587	713	44,9

Source: Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment Finland 2022

The absence of a good network is as well a severe barrier to integration. The sharing and availability of information is also an important aspect. Networks are perceived to provide migrants with information and opportunities that they need to successfully integrate into society. Most migrants however lack close ties with native Finns and as such remained closed in their own space. Negative aspects such as racism and other homophobic tendencies towards migrant can easily create a hostile atmosphere that impedes social cohesion and lead to societies that are unequal. Moreover, negative attitudes of migrants not adhering to the integration plan as well as failure to respect government laws can hinder integration.

### 3.5 Role played by immigrant associations towards integration

Migration scholars are increasingly realizing the relevance of immigrant associations towards integration as they are not only relevant for the immigrants themselves, but as well for their participation and integration into the host society (Schrover & Vermeulen 2005, pp.823-832).

Immigrants set up such organizations to create, express and maintain cultural identity while striving to become responsible and active citizens in their new country.

Immigrant associations are mainly focused on the social integration of their members as well as their descendants and the maintenance of a sense of belonging to a cultural heritage. For example, Jardim & Silva (2019) cited literature by some scholars (Hung 2007., Boccagni & Pilati, 2015) that share the idea that migrant organizations have long provided essential social services to respective immigrant populations, taking a role of acting as mediators between migrant communities and public institutions. As such, the organizations assist migrants in dealing with daily issues such as giving practical guidance and access to information that is relevant for integration such as employment, education, health, and housing.

Integration of immigrants into new societies is a long process that does not depend only on economic and educational aspects as well as other vital determinants, cultural associations are equally relevant and will continue to play crucial roles with regards to integration in new societies. Cultural organizations are instrumental to the lives of immigrants, their families, and community. They act as community centers where newcomers can be among others who speak the same local language and where they can learn to navigate life with regards to integration in host society. Also, the associations serve as safe environments where the children of settled and integrated migrants can learn about their culture, provides a channel for partnership with other associations and help in building networks that broadens immigrant support in the community, creates channels through which elected local council officials can reach migrant groups (Erwin 2014).

Furthermore, the process of integration of immigrants as already discussed does not as it is often perceived not only taking place at the level of individual migrants, whose path to integration is measured in terms of employment, housing, education, and social and cultural adaptation in the new society. Integration as well does occur at the collective level of the immigrant group such as local associations which is also a mechanism for integration (Rinus 2003). In this light, immigrant associations in Finland have used their local association to foster the integration of their members into Finnish society. For example, Nguyen (2019) in his thesis titled, *A Guidebook for Vietnamese immigrants to integrate into Finnish society*, produced a guidebook in Vietnamese language for members of the association especially new immigrants by providing vital and necessary information covering integration services as well as many aspects of life that a new migrant will encounter in Finland.

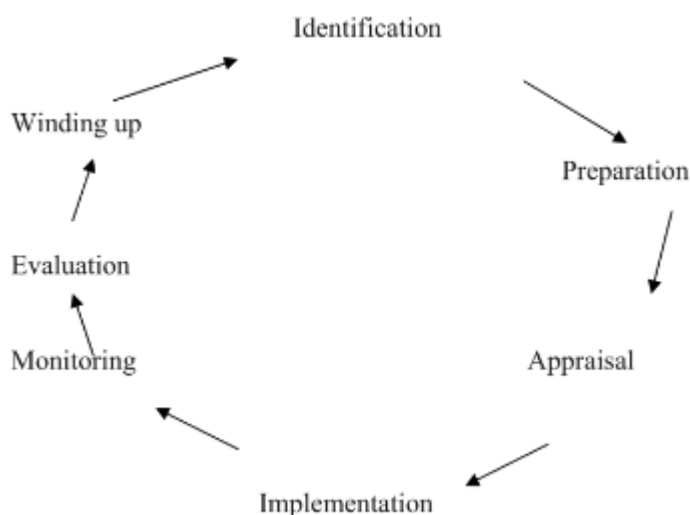
#### 4 Implementation of the guidebook

In this part of the chapter, the implementation process of the product which is the guidebook for members of the Bakossi Area Cultural and Development Association (BACDAF) is discussed. These aspect entails the processes and actions taken into consideration to achieve the objectives as well as detailing every element that complimented the process. This was not a big project that required financial planning and other bottlenecks or administrative procedures. However, it was still necessary to follow simple procedures in realizing such a product.

##### 4.1 Planning of the guidebook

Planning is an arrangement for doing something which is considered in advance. It is also about determining what is to be done, when and by whom. It helps to lay down the objectives that needs to be realized and specific course of action to achieve it. Planning guides the implementation of a project as well as assist in identifying issues that needs to be addressed (Abraham 2014). A project life cycle refers to a logical sequence of activities to accomplish a project goal or objectives thus implementing the guidebook will be guided by project cycle principles from planning that involves identifying issues that needs to be involved, implementation phase that consists of carrying out, as well as the processes used to complete the tasks and lastly the evaluation phase.

Fig: 5 Project life cycle



Source: Abraham Akampurira: Project Planning and Management. An Aspect of Development Hamburg. Anchor Academic Publishing 2014



This project cycle by Abraham (2014) which provided a logical sequence of activities to accomplish the project goals regarding the handbook. Irrespective of scope or challenges, any project must go through a series of stages during the implementation.

Here, the first phase is identification. At this level of a project, the output and critical success factors are defined. This is immediately followed by the planning phase which comprises of breaking down the project into smaller tasks. In the execution phase, the project plan is executed, and lastly, a closure or Exit phase which marks the completion of the project. It should be noted that, the project cycle comprises of seven stages altogether, each stage links with the preceding one and leads forward to the next stage. These includes Identification, Preparation, Appraisal, Implementation, Monitoring, Evaluation and Wind up.

To successfully realize a product like a guidebook, it is important to have a suitable plan to guide the process. After the presentation of this thesis plan, an approval was given to begin the thesis process by my supervisor. I scheduled a planned meeting with the working life partner the Bakossi Area Cultural and Development Association Finland (BACDAF) on the 29.10.2022 from 17:00- 19:00 pm which was also a date for their monthly general assembly meeting hosted in the home of one of the members. Top of the agenda was the planning of the guidebook.

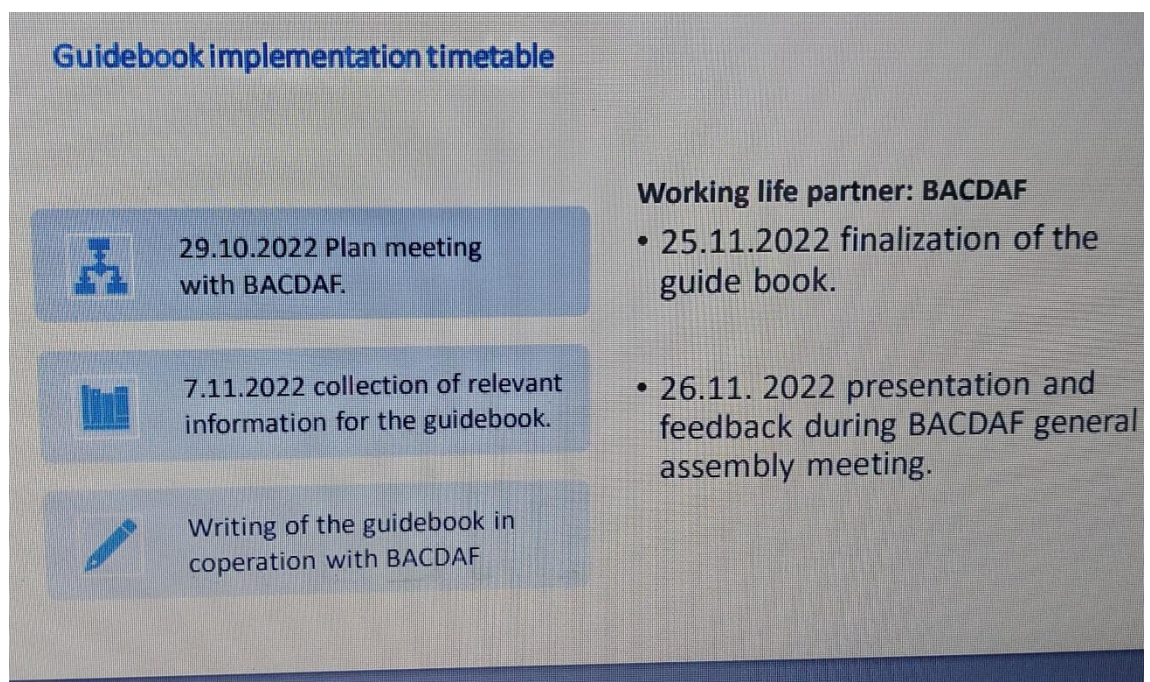


Fig: Fig: 6 Guidebook implementation timetable below showing the action plan that was built to realize the product. 29.10 2022 was the plan meeting with BACDAF, 7.11.2022 collection of relevant information for the guidebook, writing of the guidebook in cooperation with

BACDAF. The 25.11.2022 was set for the finalization of the guidebook while the 26.11.2022 was set aside for the presentation and feedback during BACDAF general assembly meeting.

During the conceptualization of the guidebook which was triggered by the need of the working life partner. We discussed and agreed the formulation and design of the guidebook as well as those most important and vital information regarding integration in Finland. Aspects such as the design of the guidebook was very important to the working life partner as they did not want a guidebook with many pages. Since the writer of this work is responsible for producing the guidebook based on the needs of the working life partner, I suggested that information on the guidebook will be gathered from relevant sources and websites regarding integration in Finland.

Although everyone in the association is a registered member, not everyone is a native of Bakossi as some of the women are from other tribes in Cameroon as well as Finland but married to men from the Bakossi area and as such automatically represent the Bakossi tribe in all aspects as per the constitution of the association. Therefore, though the Bakossi tribe has a local language known as the Akoose which is unfortunately not spoken by everyone in the association, it was agreed during the planning meeting that the language of the guidebook will be in English and in the years to come, French will be included especially as most of the members are bilingual in nature.

Other aspects discussed during the planning were issues of cultural sensitivity. There were no issues with regards to this especially as we live in an open society where there is the respect for law, equality, and human rights. The font size of the guidebook as well as images and colors were left for me to manage. It was agreed that I should not incur any financial costs on behalf of the association during the implementation of the guidebook. However, the association will cover any financial cost for printing the guidebook on a hard copy if need arises.

In implementing the guidebook, I was able to follow specific steps to help guide the entire process and to reduce the risk of working out of the needs of the working life partner. Soon after getting the preferences of the working life partner regarding the guidebook design and content, I was already aware of the task, producing a less cumbersome guidebook with just the most vital and relevant information regarding integration in Finland since there is plenty of information in many languages regarding integration in Finland. The first session was the guidebook I did was the cover page. Added some cultural elements and the Finnish and Cameroonian flag.



Fig 7: The cover page of the guidebook with Finnish and Cameroonian flag at the background.

Another important aspect in the implementation process was respecting the wish of the working life partner to have the guidebook produced in English language. This was a recommendation made during the initial stage of the implementation that began at the end of October. Having the guidebook in a language that everyone in the association understands, will help the members access the most essential and vital information on integration in Finland. I started implementing the guidebook on a step-by-step procedure. Also, the information contained in the guidebook was obtained mostly from government sources and websites in Finland on immigrant integration discussed in this work. The web pages used were not subject to copyright infringements. I made sure I equally paid attention to ethical principles by not using unauthorized material in any aspect of implementing the guidebook. The guidebook content contains firstly, a brief information about Finland and later those most vital elements that promotes the successful integration of immigrants. Employment, Education, housing, healthcare as well as other important aspects such as obtaining a driver's license and voting rights. Full guidebook can be accessed from the appendix of this work.



Fig: 8 The content of the guidebook with key aspects that promotes successful integration.

This work proceeded with the implementation phase trying out different colors to see if it shades the information or the text in the guidebook before applying the final elements such as a soothing background color. All these was being implemented using the Canva design platform. It considered very suitable for producing the guidebook due to its variety and easy to use platform for those with weak designing skills. With it, I was able to create the guidebook using quick tips, choosing the dimensions, creating background colors, adding text as well as visual images if necessary. Moreover, there are options for many free images to use free of charge. Often, I will first select a desired color, try it out if it suits the design and words appear clearly before proceeding to the next page. I followed this simple step throughout the implementation process.

While implementing the guidebook, different font sizes were used to make reading for the users easy. According to Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS 2010), since readability of fonts differ greatly, it is important to use fonts that are highly readable in the basic text. The heading should be bolder and with much slightly bigger fonts. This element shows good contrast and thus makes reading easier. Also, to help the reader pick up the main points from the guidebook, I constantly used variations in headings and basic text to catch the attention of the reader.

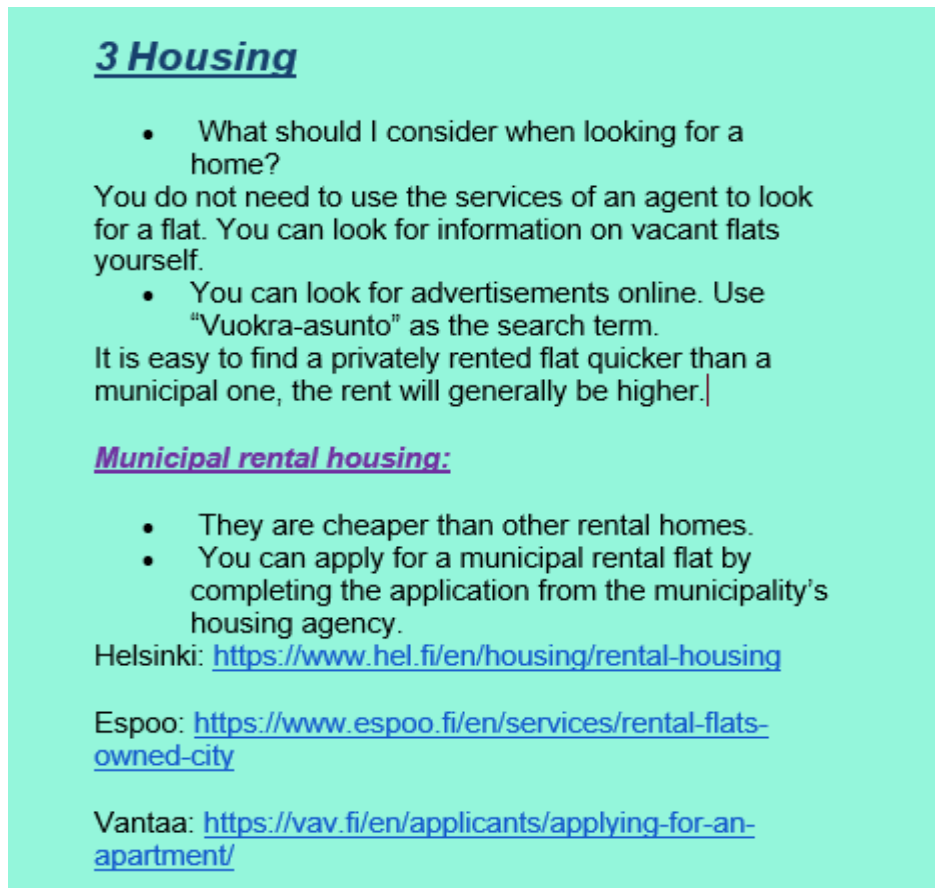


Fig:9 A content page of the guidebook showing different font sizes as well as different colors used in some text to make reading and understanding easier for a user.

Furthermore, during the implementation process, besides the font sizes being an important feature, the layout and design of the guidebook were equally important. These days, people are always in a hurry and sometimes consider reading guidebooks as a waste of precious time. As such, I decided to produce a guidebook that will attract the attention of the users so that they will be able to read the guidebook even in a hurry. I made sure that, while the guidebook needs to be appealing to attract the reader's interest, the most essential aspect is if whether the users can understand and use the material accordingly. Therefore, during the implementation, I was placing more emphasis on the message to be retained in the guidebook than making it look beautiful with less substance.

Moreover, to convey the information in the guidebook and make it more appealing as well as resonating with the target group, images such as visuals that are free in the web and not subjected to copyrights as a good way to enhance written material and help the users to understand the main message. Based on (CMS 2010), visual elements help attract and hold the attention of the readers and help them recall information read or seen. They are also useful in enticing less- skilled readers by giving the work a friendly look and making them appear at

first glance to be easy to read. I was able to use visuals to help reinforce important elements, emphasis on main points.

When implementing a guidebook for a specific cultural group like that of BACDAF Finland, it is important to show some level of cultural awareness and respect for the culture of the users. Cultural sensitivity was an important element taken into consideration during the implementation of the guidebook. I demonstrated respect for the target group by respecting their cultural background. I avoided using vulgar language and inappropriate images that can be culturally sensitive. Moreover, I carefully navigated aspects related to health such as mental health which is a sensitive issue to the target group. According to the Finnish institute for health and welfare (THL 2022), cultural sensitivity refers to the willingness, ability and sensitivity required to understand people with different background.

Implementing the guidebook entails making use of different colors. One aspect of cultural sensitivity with the target group is that some colors such as red evoke sensitive feelings as it is associated with danger. During the implementation, I was advised by the president of the association to use red minimally. Therefore, knowing that different colors impact mood and perception, I opted for calming multicolor. Based on Canva design platform (2022), multicolor are open for all and using them is great for capturing the spirit of diversity.



Fig 10: Background color used in the guidebook. Calming color that does not shades text in black.

The full guidebook is available in the appendix of this work in a printable format. This way, the work life representative can print it whenever necessary. The guidebook will also be uploaded in the association's websites whenever the website is functional.

## 5 Feedback and Evaluation

With regards to feedback, I received what I will term as objective feedback regarding aspects of the guidebook from the working life representative and the President of the association with whom I exchanged several emails regarding the guidebook. The content of the guidebook specifically the information on integration was well appreciated as it was in line with the needs of the group. Although most of the information on integration could be assessed from other web pages in Finland, the president was delighted and appreciative of the effort made to pick out those most vital aspects of integration such as socio-economic determinants, education, housing as well as health care. Verbal feedback from members of the association during the end of month General assembly meeting that took place on the 26.11.2022. Again, the information was seen as useful, but members expected the guidebook to include some images as it was deemed quite plain.

On the other hand, there were aspects in the guidebook that I equally received feedback on which as a professional, consider them to be weaknesses that in subsequent and future work life, I will improve my knowledge and technical skills in managing them much better. For example, the design of the handbook looked very basic though it contained the vital information that was needed. In this case, the president suggested that I use images or pictures that resonates with members of the group to lay emphasis on certain aspects such as employment and education. A good way as such was to have a picture of an African person dressed in a nursing uniform for example as it easy for a user to retain this kind of image and information and dream of a work life in the social and health care field or any other domain.

Concerning the evaluation of own performance, my personal evaluation was based on the feedback from the president and members of his association. Though the final product which was a guidebook containing useful and vital information on integration looked very basic, it was however created based on the needs of the Bakossi Area Cultural and Development Association Finland (BACDAF). The objectives were to make a guidebook that was easy to read and easy to retain information contained in it. The author was fully aware of the cultural sensitivity elements involved when producing such a product for a cultural organization which made him mindful of the kind of images and language used.

I know from the feedback received that the guidebook looked very basic and was not containing images to accompany some of the most vital elements of integration. I was aware that I needed to make the guidebook attractive to captivate the interest of the users. However, due to time constraints with deadlines, the quality of the guidebook did not appear as planned. I concentrated efforts more on the vital aspect of the guidebook which was the information on integration in Finland than the images and other visuals. I also lacked creativity skills to manage such a product in a short space of time. I intend to improve on

these aspects in the future. Overall, I was pleased with my efforts in having the guidebook completed.

## 6 Reliability and ethics of the thesis

Keeping ethics and writing in conformity with the guidelines provided by Laurea University of Applied Sciences and generated by Arene.fi (2018) was an important element observed throughout the entire preparation and writing process. I conducted verbal interviews with 3 members of the working life, and they agreed their personal identities to be concealed and used just their administrative titles to mention them in the background information of this work. With respect to aspects such as the written part of the thesis, different literature and research material including web pages related to integration of immigrants was used. Always ensured that the material and sources were credible before putting them into use in this work.

Furthermore, though being an active member of the organization BACDAF, I had to always function professionally by making sure that I did not put any aspects or conflict of interest that can overshadow my work and objectives. This was echoed in Arene (2018) whereby it is necessary to ascertain any possible conflict of interest with respect to the thesis topic. “A conflict of interest implies that a person has a relationship with the issue being processed which may jeopardize the individual’s neutrality. (Arene.fi) I therefore always remained neutral and did my job ethically and professionally. During the implementation of the guidebook, elements of cultural sensitivity were taken seriously into consideration.

## 7 Conclusion and Discussion

Firstly, regarding own thoughts and reflection, immigrant integration in my opinion is a concern that will hardly be pushed aside by any political rhetoric or negative host country sentiments towards immigrants. Using the term for political gains will only worsen the successful integration of migrants into the new society. Finland for example does not have a long history of hosting large international migrants compared to major European countries like Germany and France. However, the small number of migrants that has steadily been increasing during the last few years, poses several challenges for successive governments.

The labor market outcome of migrants for example remains particularly poor. When migrants fail to integrate fully into the new country, it results in serious economic and financial repercussions, social cohesion and harmony becomes a problem due to increased inequalities. The limited experience in dealing with large numbers of migrants implies there are short



comings in the integration process which can be measured from high levels of unemployment rates among this group. Most of the migrants who have found employment are mostly in very low paid jobs and usually not in line with their educational qualifications obtained in Finland. Immigrants are sometimes criticized for lack of skills though it is recognized that the skills they poses can be beneficial to the Finnish society. However, most of the qualifications obtained in home countries are not recognized in Finland.

There are huge challenges for immigrants regarding a successful integration into Finnish society if words and policy fails to be turned into concrete actions. The Finnish integration system focuses heavily on language training and though policy states that language training can as well be offered to an immigrant at the workplace, few employers usually provide for such services. In this case, those immigrants are totally left out of the integration plan and thus, their path to integration becomes even more challenging than those attending full time language training and other elements that fosters integration. To many migrants, integration remains a long and elusive journey without the opportunity to learn the language. More opportunities to develop language skills will greatly assist integration.

With respect to what I learned, the thesis process in general improved my professional and learning skills. I was able to apply the theoretical knowledge gained during the studies into the work. The work provided me with a learning autonomy, though I was receiving plenty of guidance support from my supervisor, I had the responsibility to make critical decisions regarding what kind of material, methods, and techniques I needed to apply to make my work meaningful and in line with the concept of integration which was my focus in the thesis.

Being an immigrant myself, the path to integration is a continuous process and as such writing this work has immensely helped me to broaden my knowledge with various theories of integration and the phenomenon in general. Now, I have a much clearer understanding of integration. Before, I mostly considered more the socio-economic aspects but through reading of literature by different scholars, integration is not only about learning the language of the host society and finding work. Other social and cultural elements are equally relevant.

In a nutshell, the writing process was as well a kind of self-education for me. From the beginning and conceptualization of the work as well as the different presentations, I was able to instill an element of discipline and confidence in myself to drive me forward and meet up with the various deadlines. I intend to carry on with this kind of work attitude and commitment in my future working life.

With respect to development ideas, Finland already has good policies and legislation that when properly implemented and monitored, will yield positive results on immigrant integration. It is already recognized that immigrants have many potentials and skills to contribute to the Finnish labor market and society in general. Recognition of qualifications

obtained from abroad will also provide and open more opportunities in finding employment that reflects educational and other professional qualifications. The role of education and training is pivotal to migrant integration. Assisting migrants find suitable internship places where diversity is promoted provides migrants with a feeling of being accepted as part of society. Moreover, having suitable internship will expose and familiarize immigrants with the labor market as well as different professions and to be opportune to speak Finnish out of the school. Internships will also provide unique opportunities for natives to know migrants and overcome prejudice.

To conclude this work with the opinion that government efforts to offer a solid integration training program to migrants in Finland is a clear indication of the commitments and efforts the state is making to have an equal and inclusive society that provides opportunities for everyone no matter race color, religion, sexual orientation and many more. The proposal by the current government under the leadership of prime minister Sanna Marin to reform the Act on the promotion of immigrant integration, is aimed at improving and strengthening the inclusion of immigrants in society and to make integration more efficient. Developing the early-stage integration services for immigrants will support their employment and make it easier to find work as the service needs of the immigrants will be more considered.

Integration is a phenomenon that includes many aspects and involves participation from both the migrants and the receiving society. It should be noted that, the receptiveness of working life affects the employment opportunities of immigrants, and therefore, employment affects the social participation of migrants, which is an important contributor to successful integration. Improving access and encouraging more friendly immigrant policies and educating the public on the importance and strengths of a diverse society, will improve on integration and reduce negatives perceptions about immigrants.

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## Figures

Fig 1: Conceptual framework Ager and Strang (2008).....	14
Fig 2: Services supporting integration.....	16
Fig 3: The integration plan.....	18
Fig 4: Foreigner’s employment bulletin October 2022.....	23
Fig 5: Project life cycle Abraham (2014).....	24
Fig 6: Guidebook implementation timetable.....	25
Fig 7: Cover page of the Guidebook.....	27
Fig 8: Content of the guidebook with key aspects that promotes integration.....	28
Fig 9: Content page of the guidebook showing different font sizes as well different Colors used in some text to make reading easier for a user.....	29
Fig 10: Background colors used in the guidebook. Calming color that does not shade text in black.....	30



## Appendices: 1, Interviewees profile

41

	Age	Education	Marital status	Profession
President	42	BSC/MSc student	Married	Cleaner
Vice President	54	MSc Law	Married	Factory worker
Financial SEC	37	BSc	Married	Student/job seeker

## Appendices: 2, Questions for respondent

41

Q 1) What was the purpose for moving to Finland?

Q 2) Have you integrated into Finnish society?

Q 3) Did you face any challenges in integration?

Appendix 3: Guidebook . Left click twice to open the guidebook



Intergration  
Guidebook for Mem

Appendix 2: The title of the second appendix