

STRATEGIC DOCUMENT

Project: Shared Spaces – Shared Futures

Working Group:

SOCIAL INCLUSION OF MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES IN CENTER ROG

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Introduction

This document outlines the strategy for social inclusion of migrants and refugees in Center Rog. The first section of the document looks into the wider context of migration from the perspective of societal challenges and the potential migration holds and then moves on to take a closer look at creativity as a medium of social inclusion of refugees and migrants. It dives into the role the cultural centres can play from the perspective of greater social cohesion.

The strategic document and the practical measures in this document are based on the two-fold research approach. It is based on new directions in migration studies that take a new look on the term integration on one hand¹ and in field research implemented in 2022 in Slovenia specifically for this needs of this strategic document on the other.

While extensive academic literature (Phillimore, 2008, 2011) on migration is concerned with integration from various quantifiable measures, such as labor market integration, language teaching, housing, education, health care and citizenship acquisition, some academics have more recently pointed out the shortcomings of this approach. While an important role of such integration-focused policies still needs to be recognised, it is just as important to stress the importance of complementary processes contributing towards less tangible dimensions of successful social inclusion of migrants and refugees. Those, too, are crucially contributing to social cohesion.

Open, inclusive non-formal spaces where newcomers and locals have a chance to meet, collaborate and better understand each other through implementing different everyday activities², play an important role to combat otherization, discrimination, and polarisation. Therefore everyday sites which bring together migrants, refugees and locals have the potential to play a vital role in building more inclusive societies.

Center Rog as a cultural centre and a production space has the potential to become such site and thus complement the integration as a macro-proces, facilitated primarily by the nation-state. This can be done by establishing a safe space for micro-level relations: social interactions between the migrants, refugees and the locals. Center Rog, as we propose, should become one of the key urban localities in Ljubljana, where migrants and refugees feel welcome and where interaction is

¹ Critical migration studies challenge the term integration; some scholars: Caglar, De Genova, Gilroy, Glick-Schiller, Hess, Yuval-Davis

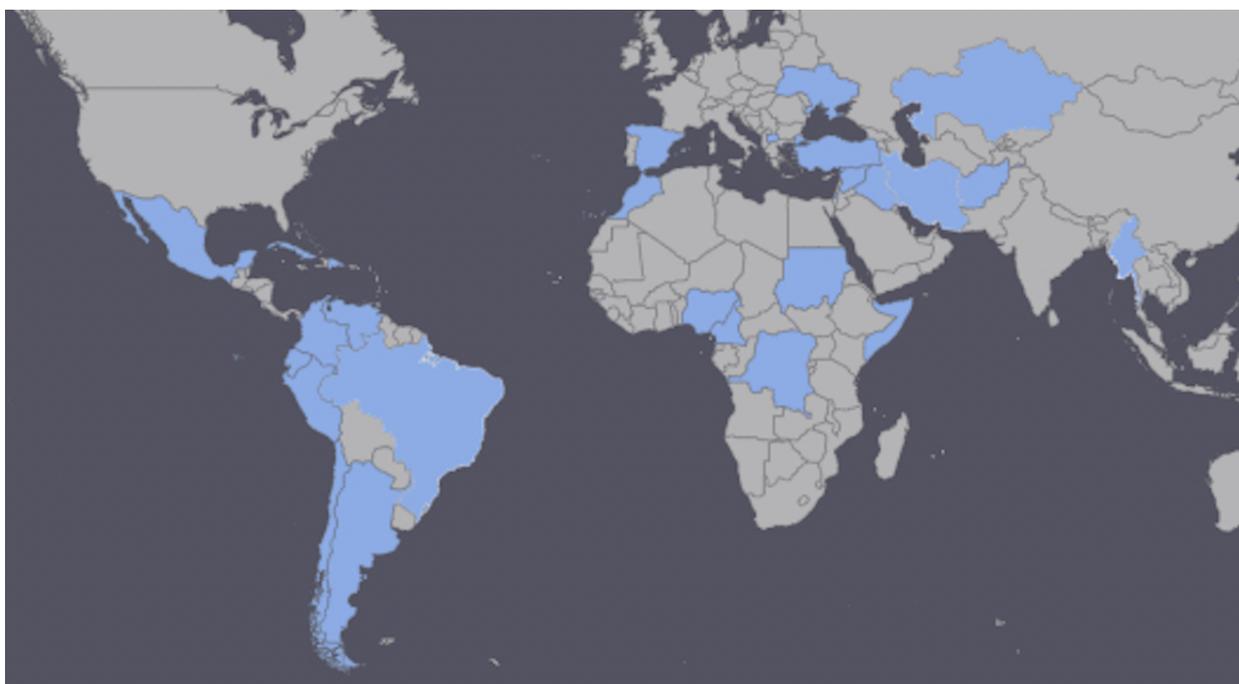
²

<https://archive.discover society.org/2020/09/02/focus-re-examining-integration-through-the-study-of-narrative-personal-experience-and-the-everyday/>

made easier through participation in creative processes (that bypasses language barriers to some extent) and by socially inclusive attitudes by culturally sensitised mentors/staff.

The importance of relations at the micro-level should not be undermined or overlooked since they are essential in negotiating the feeling of belonging of migrants and refugees, and very important for reassuring the feeling of safety of the local population. We believe that an opportunity to meet migrants and refugees is also a chance to challenge the fears and prejudice that migrants, refugees and locals might hold towards each other, and slowly melt down the stereotypes by encountering real-life persons and real-life stories along with their narratives. In this way, the new cultural and production space can facilitate greater social cohesion simply by establishing a safe environment for those interactions to happen within the Center Rog facilities.

This above-mentioned “new directions in migration studies” research approach is complemented by field research implemented within three communities living in Slovenia: Spanish-speaking, Turkish-speaking and refugees - persons with recognised international protection status. Countries of origin of members who participated in the field research are marked in a map below.



The community members from migrant communities and an NGO representative working with refugees helped design practical measures for this document, based on the needs detected within refugee and migrant communities.

1 The Challenges of Migration & the Role of Creativity in Social Inclusion Processes of Refugees and Migrants

What is the potential creativity can have on the integration of the refugee and migrant population? And how relevant is this topic from the national and international perspective? The introductory part looks into the topic of migration from a Slovene perspective while it contextualises the local perspective within the wider frame of international mobility trends. It presents some of the challenges related to cultural diversity and multiculturalism on one hand and looks into the potential migration holds for innovation but also for filling in the gap in the labour force and services on the other. It then takes a closer look into the role the Center Rog can play in the social inclusion and integration processes of refugees and migrants living in Slovenia.

Diversity On the Rise

Migration is indeed not a new phenomenon in Europe³, Slovenia, or elsewhere. However, migration is rising, both regular and irregular. As Thorbjorn Jagland put it in his forward to Council of Europe Policy Document “Guide for Policy-Makers and Practitioners”, Europe today is a continent of diversity. Living with this diversity and drawing enrichment from it is the key challenge we as a society are facing. He was correct when he wrote a decade ago the following words: “Whether or not the governments decide to replace their shrinking populations of working age by large-scale immigration, this diversity is likely to increase in the years to come.”

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According to United Nations data numbers of refugees and asylum-seekers doubled globally in the last 20 years. In 2021 one in 97 people was forcibly displaced. In 2015, it was one in 175. In Slovenia, statistics are somehow different. Due to the war that took place after the breakup of Yugoslavia, refugee numbers in Slovenia were at their highest just after it became independent.

³ Short overview of the past and present trends - [Migration data in Europe | Migration data portal](#)

⁴ <https://www.coe.int/t/democracy/migration/Source/migration/EnglishMigrantBelongingWeb.pdf>



Data Source: [World Bank](#)

Refugees in Slovenia

As of May 2022, the total number of people with international protection in Slovenia is 821⁵. There are different reasons for such low numbers of legally recognised refugees. Low numbers are inextricably linked with strict migration policies in terms of accepting refugees. According to the Asylum Information Database (AIDA), coordinated by the European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE), gaining international protection is a considerable problem in Slovenia. The reasons for that are many; however, the lack of appropriate screening of persons in need of international protection is one of the most important. According to the study, police are not conducting screenings and are reportedly not providing information on international protection when individuals express an intention to apply for international protection⁶. Generally speaking, the major problem seems to be

⁵ Total number of people who were granted international protection since 1995 is slightly higher (some people with international protection became Slovene citizens, some lost the status due to different reason etc), to see the exact numbers of people granted international protection please see: <https://www.gov.si/assets/vladne-sluzbe/UOIM/STATISTIKA/Januar-2022/Osebe-s-priznано-mednarodno-zascito-po-letih-2021-v2.pdf>

⁶ https://asylumineurope.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/AIDA-SI_2020update.pdf

people being denied access to the asylum procedure. On the other hand Slovenia is a transit country so many people who ask for international protection decide to leave and continue the journey towards other countries.

The war in Ukraine seem to have changed the situation to some extent. Slovenia expressed willingness to take in high numbers of Ukrainian refugees from the start of the Russian invasion and opened its doors widely. Therefore, the 2022 number of people who will express the need of international or other forms of protection such as temporary protection of displaced persons from Ukraine in the Republic of Slovenia⁷ will for sure be much higher than those in the previous two decades.

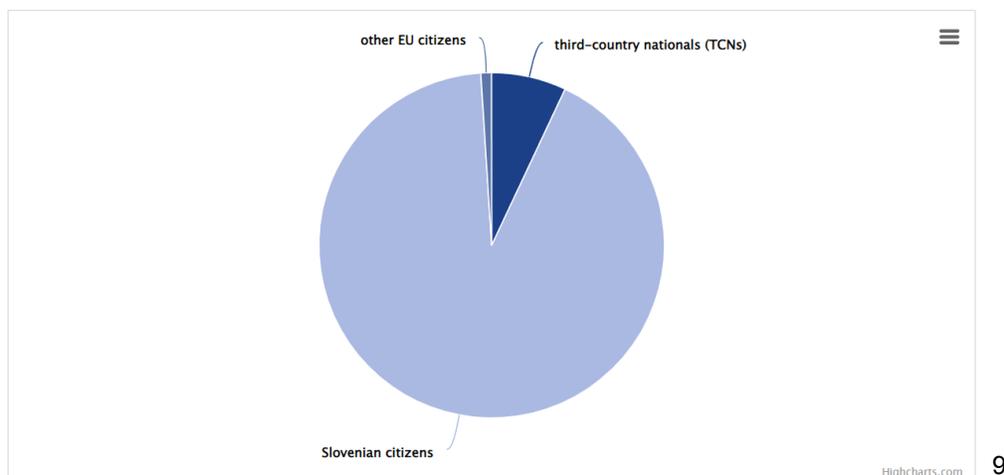
Police data from the beginning of May 2022 shows that since the Ukraine war started, 21,980 Ukrainians have entered Slovenia, and 5,738 Ukrainian refugees have so far asked for the status of temporary protection for displaced persons in Slovenia.

Migrants⁸ in Slovenia

National figures from 2017 suggest that most TCNs (third-country nationals) in Slovenia come from ex-Yugoslavian states Bosnia and Herzegovina (58 355), Kosovo (16 580), and Serbia (13 088). TCNs equal 7% of the total Slovene population. EU citizens living in Slovenia constitute 1% of the total Slovene population.

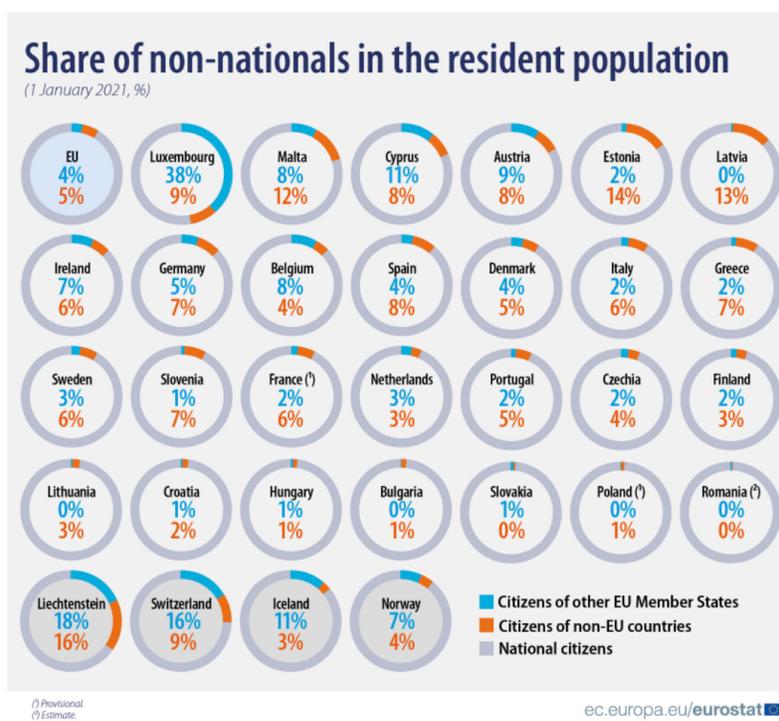
⁷ referring to newly adopted status “Začasna zaščita razseljenih oseb iz Ukrajine v Republiki Sloveniji”

⁸ Migrant: person born outside the country in question, who has moved to live there for at least 12 months (UN definition) or resident of ‘migrant background’, including person born to migrant parents (according to definitions varying between EU Member States).



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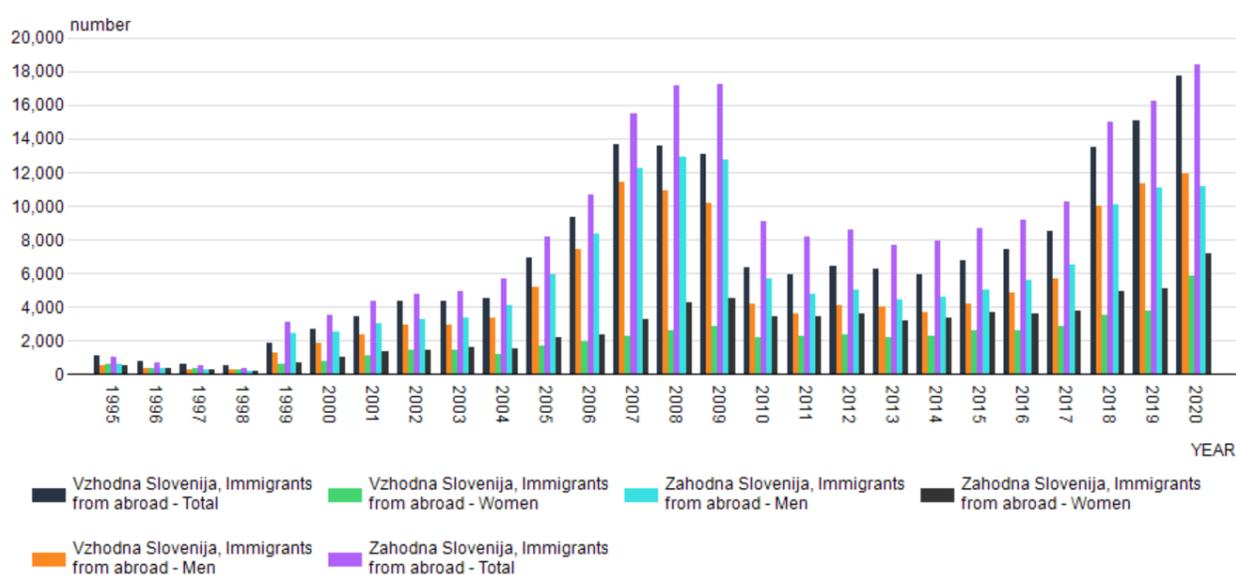
The statistics comparison between the percentage of foreign population living in Slovene statistics and the EU can be found in the chart below.



Almost 14% of the residents of Slovenia were born abroad. Nearly half of them are Slovenian citizens. 38% of the foreign-born population immigrated to Slovenia in the last ten years. (source: Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia).

Furthermore, statistics show that one in five immigrants in Slovenia has lived in Slovenia for three years or less.

Migration change of population by COHESION REGION, MEASURES and YEAR.



Source: Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia

Unprecedented levels of international mobility

As the international mobility numbers are rising, the structure of migration flows is changing globally. Migrants and refugees are more culturally and ethnically diverse than before. Also, more women are on the move than usually assumed. Therefore we are facing unprecedented levels of

international mobility. Consequentially cultural diversity and multiculturalism have become one of the critical challenges of the modern world.¹⁰

2030 Agenda recognises the increasing importance of migration to the social, economic, and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. Integration of migrants and refugees in societies was recognised not only as a key challenge but also as one of the biggest potentials at the same time.

Despite significant concerns about migration's economic and social implications, research shows that migration generates substantial economic benefits. The research the McKinsey Global Institute had implemented has demonstrated that “the movement of people across the world’s borders boosts global productivity. The countries that prioritise integration stand to make the most of this potential—improving outcomes for their economies and societies as well as for immigrants themselves.”¹¹

OECD points out the benefits of migration on the labour market, economic growth, and public purse. Migrants accounted for 70% of the increase in the workforce between 2005 – 2015 in EU. More recent research studies¹² point out the fact that a further increase of the migrant workforce will be needed, approximating 4.4 percent of the current population, to fulfil the needs of the 2030 projected job market. OECD further points out that migrants fill essential niches both in fast-growing and declining sectors of the economy. On average, young migrants are better educated than those nearing retirement, similar to the native-born population. From the perspective of the public purse, migrants contribute more in taxes and social contributions than they receive in benefits, and not vice versa, as it is wrongly assumed. Migration has a positive impact on economic growth also from the perspective of boosting the working-age population. Furthermore, migrants often arrive with skills and contribute to the human capital development of receiving countries.

IOM, among many others, is stressing the fact that migration will be much needed as Europe’s population is ageing. The EU predicts a massive shortage of workers of 45 million in the next 50 years as the working-age population will drop. “With no further migration to the EU, the population of the EU27 will be 58 million less than it was in 2010 according to Eurostat data.

Contrary to public perceptions that European countries do not need migrants, the reality is that migrants mitigate the effects of an ageing and shrinking population and will be key in the sustainability of the dependency rates.” A recent study (June 2021) from the Center for Global Development confirms this by stating the European Union and the UK will be more than 44 million of workers short by 2050 due to an ageing population and insufficient levels of migration.

¹⁰ [Women-and-Migration_PPT_Final.pptx \(live.com\)](#)

¹¹ [Global migration's impact and opportunity | McKinsey](#)

¹² [The future of work in Europe \(mckinsey.com\)](#)

Worker gap by 2050

United Kingdom	3.6 million
France	3.9 million
Germany	7.0 million
European Union + UK	43.7 million

Calculated as the number of workers needed to maintain the same working-age proportion of the population as 2015, based on projected population growth and migration patterns

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Concurrently to the process of population ageing, the demographics of Europe are affected by increased migration resulting in substantial ethnic diversity.

If integration and social inclusion processes are successfully implemented, migration holds manifold positive impacts: on the ageing population in the EU and its economy that intertwine with the social security of the ageing population, further on productivity levels, and also on the well-being of individual migrants – social, economic, physical and mental – and to their communities of origin and destination. Therefore, communities where migrants coming to and where they come from benefit.

Migration governance actors play an essential role in ensuring that newcomers are successfully integrated into society. When insufficient or ineffective efforts are made to ensure integration, newcomers can become marginalised, thus more vulnerable to risks of different kinds. Poor integration has a polarising impact on host societies and can radicalise both host and migrant populations which has multilayered negative consequences.

As mentioned in the introductory section of this document, integration centred around employment, housing, language teaching, education is important, however it should be complemented by additional efforts to reach a cohesive, non-polarised and inclusive society that successfully harvests from the potential benefits migration carries.

¹³ [Europe To Be Short 44 Million Workers by 2050 Without Increased Immigration, New Study Finds | Center for Global Development | Ideas to Action \(cgdev.org\)](#)

Role creativity and arts play in the integration process

The impacts and influence of creativity are manifold. As authors of the report “Promoting the Inclusion of Europe’s Migrants and Minorities in Arts and Culture” point out, **“creative expression, artistic activities and events can help migrants and refugees develop social bonds, support networks, and feelings of belonging in a new society, while also giving them a chance to learn about the society’s cultural practices and values.”**¹⁴

We will look more closely into the role hubs and spaces of creativity can play outside of the scope of the labour market or integration processes managed by the state. We will describe a potential positive impact creative places like Center Rog can have on the personal politics of local and migrant populations, on community building, and consequently, on integration. How can creative spaces support the integration processes of the migrant and refugee population?

We are interested in understanding what kind of role can engagement in activities related to creativity and applied arts play in the processes of strengthening feeling of belonging? As researcher and author Susan Beth Rottmann points out, belonging is actually essential for newcomers’ mental and emotional well-being and for meaningful integration.¹⁵

How could the so-called micro-sites and micro-communities serve this purpose?¹⁶ Micro-communities will emerge spontaneously when Center Rog opens its doors. Under what conditions can spaces like creative centres forge intercultural dialogue and support integration processes? How can social interactions that spontaneously occur in creative centres like Center Rog, facilitate and negotiate the identities of local and migrant populations?

Belonging as a key element of community building

‘Politics of belonging’ concerns individual processes of identification. It takes the construction of the identity out of the context of the national and international political sphere and moves it into the

¹⁴ <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/europe-migrants-minorities-arts-culture>

¹⁵ <https://archive.discoverysociety.org/2020/09/02/refugee-integration-in-europe-does-belonging-matter/>

¹⁶ Micro-communities are a term used in this context as diverse non-formal communities that will fluently form in different parts of Center Rog ecosystem: in production labs, public park, library, residential and working rooms etc. In the context of Center Rog production labs, public park, library, residential and working rooms etc. would be so called micro - sites that will offer the space for micro - communities to emerge

micro-sphere of individual processes of identification, individual and collective processes of boundary drawing, as well as formal politics of membership. As authors of an article¹⁷ “Volunteering in the Super-diverse City: How Young Urban Volunteers Negotiate Belonging” write: “Belonging, contrary to the concept of integration, does not presume a group of insiders into which a group of (yet) outsiders need to integrate, but assumes that individuals each negotiate their means of belonging in different ways.”

We believe that spaces like Center Rog can contribute towards empowerment of migrants and refugees through a strengthened feeling of belonging to the micro-communities that will form in the different production labs, working spaces, public park within the Center Rog (CR) ecosystem and, consequently, also within their city.

Empowerment, therefore, not only arises from the knowledge that can be gained or applied in the lab ecosystem offered by Center Rog, but also by the feeling of belonging to the (interest) communities being built in and around the production labs and other creative spaces of the CR.

Center Rog, as we propose, should become one of the key urban localities in Ljubljana that supports positive feelings of belonging, where migrants and refugees feel welcome and where interaction is made easier through participation in creative processes (that bypasses language barriers to some extent) and by socially inclusive attitudes by culturally sensitised mentors/staff.

Center Rog should therefore become a space where “positive interactions” between newcomers and local population are made possible. What are “positive interactions” and why are they essential in the process of integration is well described in a [Council of Europe Policy Document - A Guide for Policy-Makers and Practitioners: “ Building Migrants’ Belonging Through Positive Interactions”](#) written by Andrew Orton (pages 13-34)¹⁸.

Creativity, Identities and Center Rog

Because of the practical nature of the workflow taking place in production labs, Center Rog has the potential to become a place where people's national identities along with language and cultural barriers can become overshadowed by the knowledge, curiosity and creativity as more prominent measures of identity. This kind of space will offer an excellent opportunity for identities to be negotiated much easier than in most of public places and in the private sphere.

Identities can be perceived as more fluid, and redefined on the bases of common interests (for example, through crafts, arts and creative expression in different labs). The language and cultural barrier can be overcome easier.

¹⁷

<https://archive.discoverysociety.org/2020/09/02/volunteering-in-the-super-diverse-city-how-young-urban-volunteers-negotiate-belonging/>

¹⁸ <https://www.coe.int/t/democracy/migration/Source/migration/EnglishMigrantBelongingWeb.pdf>

- Research has shown that clear links exist between art consumption and creation on the one hand and attitudes such as openness, tolerance, empathy, and acceptance of diversity on the other. Therefore Center Rog can become a hub where those attitudes are nurtured through creative practices.¹⁹
- It is important that the above-mentioned attitudes (openness, tolerance, empathy, and acceptance of diversity) are also implemented on the practical level. Center Rog should offer migrants and refugees a possibility to become mentors and guest mentors, and not only mere users of the Center Rog's labs. In this way they will get a chance to contribute to the new community (by implementing workshops in English or Slovene for the local population) and to the community that shares their native language with their knowledge (by implementing workshops in their native language for the communities that share their native language). An opportunity to transfer the knowledge recognises them as knowledge carriers (relevant for their identities just as well as for the perception of migrants and refugees by the locals), which overcomes the prevailing identities of refugees and migrants.
- An opportunity to share the knowledge further gives the migrant and refugee population a chance to contribute to the society where they are living.
- Center Rog can establish spaces for dialogue: "Empowering arts and culture projects provide safe spaces for intercultural dialogue; they can make cultural institutions arenas for dialogue, where people with various backgrounds can come together, share concerns and become responsive to each other's interest and perspectives."²⁰
- Center Rog can become a space where personal contact between migrant population, refugees and members of the wider community is possible in day to day life of Center Rog's Labs. This will help to foster mutual understanding and empathy. This will result in a greater community understanding of the refugee and migrant population, which is an essential step toward a cohesive society²¹.
- Center Rog can offer space and basis for self-organising. Creative projects enable migrants and refugees to organise themselves, collaborate with locals, work together, express themselves and make themselves heard.

¹⁹ Xiaonan Kou, Sara Konrath, and Thalia R. Goldstein, 'The Relationship among Different Types of Arts Engagement, Empathy, and Prosocial Behavior', *Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts* 14, no. 4 (2020): 481–92.

²⁰ How culture and the arts can promote intercultural dialogue in the context of the migratory and refugee crisis; Report with case studies, by the working group of EU Member States' experts on intercultural dialogue in the context of the migratory and refugee crisis under the open method of coordination

²¹ OECD describes cohesive society as follows: " It describes a cohesive society as one which "works towards the well-being of all its members, fights exclusion and marginalisation, creates a sense of belonging, promotes trust, and offers its members the opportunity of upward social mobility." As such social cohesion is both a desirable end and a means to inclusive development" source: <https://www.oecd.org/dev/inclusivesocietiesanddevelopment/social-cohesion.htm#:~:text=It%20describes%20a%20cohesive%20society.and%20a%20means%20to%20inclusive>

As already mentioned, establishing a space where the migrant and refugee population can nurture and further develop feelings of belonging, is a very important form of community building that includes both the local population and newcomers. Community building, from this perspective, means building communities on the basis of interests, knowledge, creativity and artistic expression rather than on the basis of nationality, social status and language barriers that are reality for many migrants and refugees. In this way, the activities taking place in Center Rog can significantly contribute towards the feeling of belonging of the newcomers. Such a feeling of belonging is one of the important bases on which migrants and refugees can further build on to feel included into the society through newly established social networks, gained experience and knowledge.

Center Rog can therefore offer assistance in building supportive relationships and connections between the migrants, refugees and the receiving community. All above mentioned will considerably contribute towards strengthening the social cohesion of the society.

Values and Outward Communication

We believe Center Rog should publicly declare their values and

- declare itself as a space where any type of discrimination of migrants and refugees is non-acceptable,
- declare itself as a space that combats discrimination by offering equal opportunities in all working spaces of Center Rog
- promote equal opportunities throughout all of the activities taking place in Center Rog

Clear and appropriate branding and language need to be agreed for all communications. Terms and values of anti-discrimination, equal treatment, equal opportunities, equality, diversity, etc should be adopted and embedded into the outward communication of Center Rog.

Public recognition and welcome of migrant and refugee populations should further be done both formally and informally by Center Rog.

Promotion and recognition of migrants' and refugees' positive contributions is a communication medium of welcoming them into Center Rog

Refugees and migrants should be publicly recognized by Center Rog also as knowledge carriers and contributors to society. This can be done not only on the declaration level but also in practice by integrating them into all spheres of Center Rog, especially in mentor roles. In this way, Center Rog will support and co-create an environment where municipality representatives speak out in a

positive way about migration and integration issues, rather than exacerbating the scapegoating trends.

PRACTICAL MEASURE 1:

Every two weeks at least one workshop should be implemented by a migrant / refugee mentor. After the first year of Center Rog opening its doors, at least one workshop per week should be implemented by migrant/refugee mentors. Those workshops can be implemented in production labs for local and/or migrant/refugee populations. It is very important that migrant and refugee mentors are paid by Center Rog, just as the rest of the guest mentors carrying out workshops.

Center Rog should identify, brand and communicate itself to the public by being urban, open, and inclusive. This should be done through integrating the above-mentioned attitudes into communication strategy and also by embedding them in all layers of organisational structure: through leadership complying with the value system, through sensitisation of all staff members, through continuous work on sensitisation of mentors in the lab workspaces, and through embedding those values into day-to-day activities of Center Rog.

Consistency of publicly declared values with the implementation of day-to-day activities of Center Rog is essential.

PRACTICAL MEASURE 2:

Center Rog should prepare its communication strategy in collaboration with NGOs active in the field of social inclusion and integration of migrants and refugees.

PRACTICAL MEASURE 3:

Center Rog provides training on intercultural communication, intercultural awareness and sensitivity for their staff on regular basis, 2 times per year. Employees should work on improving their intercultural competencies (become aware of their own cultural codes and how they affect behavior, educate themselves about specifics of other cultures and religions).

Those trainings should be implemented in collaboration with organisations focused on social inclusion, integration, global learning and intercultural communication, prioritising those with hands-on knowledge rooted in their work with migrants and refugees.

Trainings should offer a better understanding of what is needed for equal access and for equal opportunities for persons with language barriers, cultural differences etc. to be fully included in the learning and production processes taking place in Center Rog. Language, culture and other barriers that vulnerable communities are facing should be considered, understood and addressed properly within all the processes of the Center Rog ecosystem.

PRACTICAL MEASURE 4:

On behalf of Center Rog, one person should be chosen for the role of a “trustee”. The person in the role of “trustee” will be the one to whom migrant or refugee communities members should always be able to turn to if they face any discriminatory issues taking place in Center Rog if they in any way feel discriminated against or excluded from the processes taking place in production labs or in other Center Rog facilities.

Before taking on the role of a “trustee”, the person should attain intense intercultural training provided by NGOs to become better equipped for the role of the intercultural mediator. Further advice is to recruit and train somebody who has a migration background themselves to fill this role. Trust is the basis of this role’s success, and a person who has first-hand experience has a greater potential to understand the migrants /refugees better. In this way, this person might be perceived as more easily approachable by others.

Because of the traditional male-female roles present in many societies where the migrants and refugees come from, we propose that this role is taken on by a woman. Only in this way, will women feel safe to report an issue if it emerges. When the conflict arises, the “trustee” does her best to mediate the process.

2 Methodology

2.1 Team, Milestones and Methodology

The goal of the team working on the practical aspect of this strategic document was to develop a strategic document with necessary recommendations that would enable Center Rog to include migrant and refugee communities in the daily life of Center Rog in an effective way so that both local, migrant and refugee communities would benefit from meeting and working together in the Center Rog facilities. It is highly recommended that this is implemented from the very moment when Center Rog opens its doors to the public, but needs to be planned in advance.

The first step towards connecting migrant and refugee communities with Center Rog was implemented by a working group that involved three groups living in Slovenia, the first group being refugees, the second group Spanish speaking migrants (mostly Latin Americans), and the third

group Turkish speaking migrants and refugees²². The working group consisted of community representatives who are in constant contact with the members of above mentioned communities and know the needs of their respective communities very well. For the purpose for this document we will use the term Community Leaders as community representatives who communicate were implementing the research and who communicate with Center Rog on behalf of the members they are in contact with.

The questionnaire was developed in a collaborative way with Center Rog and distributed within the three above mentioned communities. It was designed to record the needs and interests of the community members on one hand and to map the knowledge (relevant within the scope of Center Rog's production facilities) which communities carry on the other.²³

Representatives of three communities filled in more than 150 questionnaires, 50 on average per community. We named this process "Piloting With Communities".

2.2 Inclusion of new communities through forging new collaborations through piloting methodology

PRACTICAL MEASURE 5:

The strategy foresees that Center ROG gradually establishes new collaborations with community leaders and/or communities (migrant and refugee population) by forging partnership with new communities as described in the following stages/phases:

- 1) Within the first year, Center ROG should collaborate with three communities that have implemented the needs assessment and knowledge mapping procedure in the first phase (during the development of the strategic document). Center Rog should collaborate with those communities closely and support their social inclusion and participation in the ecosystem of Center Rog. Knowledge mapping within communities resulted in locating persons with specific knowledge and skills (fabrication, applied arts and design) that can bring innovation to the local environment and/or can share knowledge within their communities. Those persons should be engaged by Center Rog as guest mentors. They should be offered an opportunity to implement workshop(s) for local and same language speaking group population.

²² Many Turkish speaking interviewees are also under international protection, so there are some cross-sections between the groups, however persons interviewed under the "refugee group" were not Turkish speaking. More information about the structure:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1xDA2ZqulyTGsbm7G2vRZZKicmpqf6rrJ/edit?usp=sharing&oid=116180102983189263274&rtpof=true&sd=true>

²³ More about the questionnaires:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1xDA2ZqulyTGsbm7G2vRZZKicmpqf6rrJ/edit?usp=sharing&oid=116180102983189263274&rtpof=true&sd=true>

General guideline:

When the workshops are implemented in languages other than English or Slovene, we recommend that the translation to Slovene and/or English is ensured. In this way, the content becomes accessible also to English speaking local, migrant and refugee populations. Therefore the workshops become more inclusive and accessible to a wider audience.

- 2) Within the second year, 3 more partnerships with new communities should be initiated by Center Rog. The process of needs assessment and knowledge mapping implemented through questionnaires²⁴ and meetings with the community members should be implemented. Center Rog should collaborate with community leaders of those communities closely and support their social inclusion and participation in the ecosystem of Center Rog (production labs, etc). Community members with specific knowledge (fabrication, applied arts and design) should be invited to Center Rog as mentors and should be given an opportunity to implement guest workshops.

- 3) Within the third year, 3 more partnerships with new communities should be initiated by Center Rog. The process of needs assessment and knowledge mapping implemented through questionnaires and interviews should be implemented. Center Rog should collaborate with community leaders of those communities closely and support their social inclusion and participation in the ecosystem of Center Rog (production labs etc). Community representatives with specific knowledge (fabrication, applied arts and design) should be invited to Center Rog as mentors and should be given an opportunity to implement guest workshops.

Therefore, in each consecutive year, 3 more partnerships with new communities should be initiated by Center Rog and the process of needs assessment and knowledge mapping implemented. Center Rog should closely collaborate with community leaders of those communities and support their social inclusion and participation in the ecosystem of Center Rog.

In this way, Center Rog will be closely collaborating with 15 communities in 5 years, and this number will increase linearly.

²⁴ The questionnaires were already developed for the first round of reach out (refugee, turkish and spanish speaking communities)

3 Results of the first phase of the “Piloting With Communities”- summing up the results of the reach out within refugee, Turkish, and Spanish speaking communities

More than 150 members from 3 communities (Spanish speaking, Turkish speaking and refugees) helped us to better understand the needs and interests of their community members. We looked into what the labs are offering equipment-wise, knowledge-wise and opportunities-wise.

Furthermore, within above-mentioned communities, we mapped the knowledge that could be applied or disseminated within Center Rog facilities. As already mentioned, knowledge mapping within communities results in creating a database of persons with specific knowledge and skills (fabrication, applied arts and design) that can bring innovation to the local environment and/or can share knowledge within their communities. This strategic document suggests that Center Rog engages those persons as guest mentors on continuous bases. They should be offered an opportunity to implement workshop(s) for local and same language speaking group population.

3.1 Needs and Interests Assessment

We have interviewed 58 refugees with recognised refugee status in Slovenia. Refugees interviewed are originally coming from Afghanistan (14), Iran (10), Syria (9), Iraq (6), Palestine (5), Somalia (3). The rest are from Congo, Cameroon, Morocco, Ukraine, Sudan, Nigeria, Myanmar, and Kazakhstan. 74% were men, the remaining 26% were women.

Spanish speaking community members filled in 55 questionnaires. The socio-demographic data of the Hispanic-American population residing in Slovenia, from a sample consisting of 55 participants were of the total 71% women, while the remaining 29% were men. Regarding the origin of the participants in this survey, 46% of the participants come from Venezuela, 18% from Colombia and 9% from Peru. Likewise, it is possible to observe a lower percentage of people from Mexico 7%, Cuba 5%, Ecuador and Argentina, with 4%, respectively, being the most representative currently in the Slovenian community.

Turkish speaking community collected 46 questionnaires. 13 of the participants are migrants and 33 of them have refugee status with recognised international protection. 2 participants were from Macedonia and 3 from Slovenia with Turkish roots. The rest 41 participants are from different parts of Turkey. Mostly they come from the central or west sides of Turkey.

Communities expressed great interest in visiting Center Rog, in using their facilities, in gaining more knowledge in different labs and also in sharing the knowledge. Also the gesture of Center Rog reaching out to them through their community members, presenting them the plans of Center Rog currently being built, was received in a highly positive way. Many members pointed out that this gesture made them feel welcome.

More detailed results gained through the questionnaires can be found in the document accessible through the link added to the footnotes²⁵.

4 Migrants, Refugees and the Potential of Knowledge Transfer

As mentioned earlier, it is essential to recognise refugees and migrants as knowledge carriers and as people with potential, just as well as providing opportunities for them to have a chance to challenge various prejudice and negative achievement stereotypes aimed at them.

Earlier, we the importance of Center Rog's public recognition of migrants' potential to make a positive contribution in the society. This is of special significance due to the fact that Municipality of Ljubljana is Center Rog's founder. Further on, we believe public recognition of migrants' positive contributions will play an important role in how welcomed refugees and migrants feel in the Center Rog.

As Andrew Orton put it: "Recognising, respecting and valuing the potential of migrants to contribute in a wide range of ways (socially, economically, etc.) to the receiving society is a crucial foundation on which positive interactions can be built. Promoting greater recognition of the positive ways in which migrants can contribute to the receiving society supports positive interaction both:

- (i) at a social level, by helping to build an environment in which positive interactions are more likely to take place;
- (ii) at an individual level, by forming an essential factor within (or arising from) such interactions.

Recognising migrants' potential to make a positive contribution sends an important message that their presence is welcomed. ... Such recognition can encourage migrants to interact more due to a perceived greater likelihood of receiving a positive reaction. Amongst migrants and also the wider public, it can also help to counter the many negative portrayals of migrants that are

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<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1xDA2ZqulyTGsbm7G2vRZZKicmpqf6rrJ/edit?usp=sharing&oid=16180102983189263274&rtpof=true&sd=true>

prevalent in the media and often exacerbated by groups who use migrants as scapegoats, by blaming them for a wide range of perceived negative changes in society.”²⁶

PRACTICAL MEASURE 6:

LEADING BY EXAMPLE

Center Rog should be ensuring diversity and representativeness among its staff. It should implement effective measures to prevent and combat discrimination in employment processes. In this way it can become a positive example of how public body can demonstrate its commitment to anti-discrimination measures and ‘leads by example’. This will enhance Center Rog’s credibility and can indirectly encourage other municipality, state and private bodies to follow their lead.

PRACTICAL MEASURE 7:

The persons (refugee, Turkish speaking and Spanish speaking communities) who showed interest in sharing the knowledge with local and/or refugee/migrant communities in their native language should be invited by Center Rog to implement pilot workshops as mentors for the local/migrant population. In this way, they are given an opportunity to share their knowledge and contribute to society in Slovenia. They should be remunerated for their work.

5 Recognizing Specific Needs of Communities and Addressing Them

In the following chapters, specific needs of each community will be presented as they were detected by working group members implementing the research when reaching out to their members. Each community also proposed possible solutions. Those are listed as practical measures.

²⁶ Building Migrants’ Belonging Through Positive Interactions; A Guide for Policy-Makers and Practitioners; Connecting Recognition, Participation and Empowerment To Improve Social Cohesion; Council of Europe Policy Document; author: Andrew Orton

5.1 Refugee Community²⁷

Some specifics were pointed out regarding refugees.

While some refugees are highly educated, there are also some who didn't have access to formal education in their home countries and could be as well illiterate. This is due to the lack of basic educational infrastructures and access to modern technology in their countries with long lasting war and devastation (Somalia, Afghanistan, Eritrea) or due to costly education system, which is why unfortunately, many refugees have to employ themselves in jobs that do not require high qualifications.

Moreover, to be able to be included into Slovenian formal educational programmes, refugees need recognized school certificates (from elementary or high schools), which they often do not possess or are unable to bring back from their countries of origin.

With the Center Rog approach, refugees can get an opportunity to learn and upgrade their knowledge, also in terms of practising the Slovene language through various activities in production labs, while enhancing practical and handcraft skills simultaneously.

Therefore Center Rog can offer them an opportunity to make up for their gaps in knowledge especially because some are very slow in acquiring the Slovene language; the practical skills and handicrafts would be easier for them.

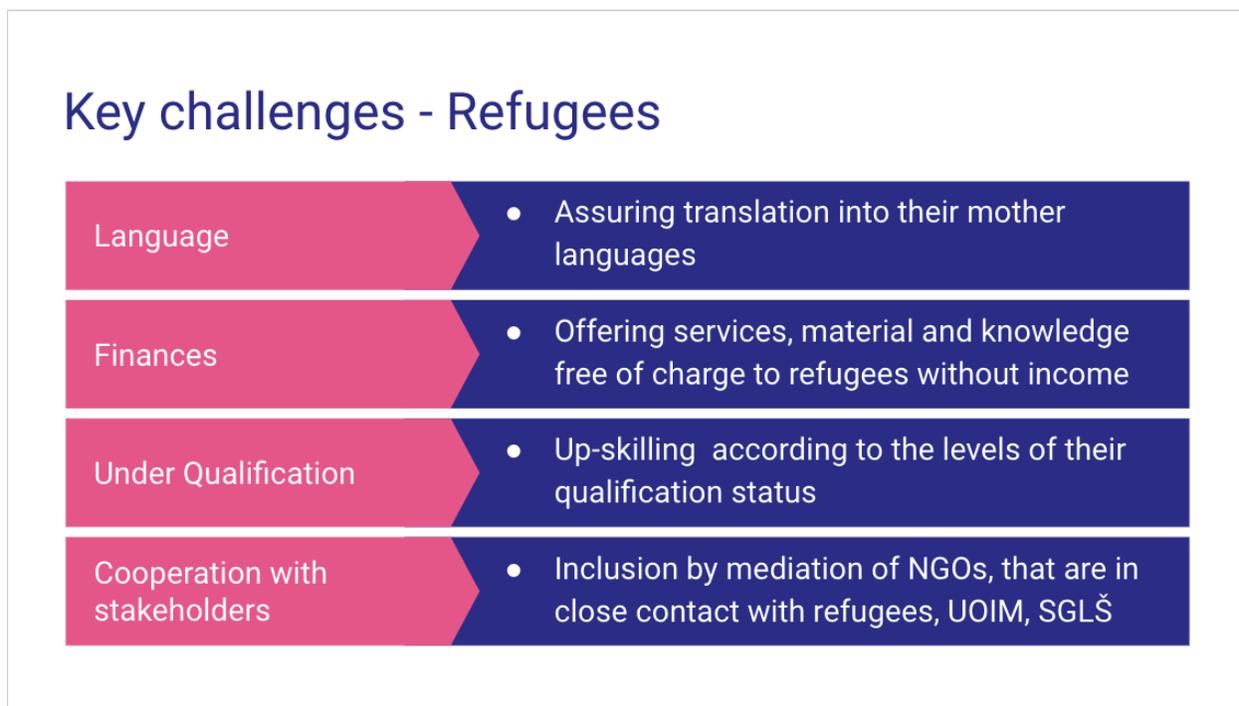
There are some refugees who are very eager to seize the opportunity that the Center Rog is prepared to offer. Those who are experienced in one of the Center Rog's fields (fabrication, applied arts and design) and possess knowledge would like to upgrade their skills and learn how to use the equipment in the labs.

Exceptions: Skilled and educated refugees integrate the knowledge easier and in a shorter time, have less problems finding jobs or manage to open their own businesses in comparison to the refugees coming from countries with dysfunctional educational system.

However, many refugees and migrants possess informal skills which they acquired through work, but also traditional knowledge that pass through generations within their families.

²⁷ Author of this section: Katarina Kromar

PRACTICAL MEASURES 8 – 11:



The key factors that could obstruct the active participation and inclusion of the refugees and migrants population in the ecosystem of Center Rog will be presented, also possible solutions will be proposed.

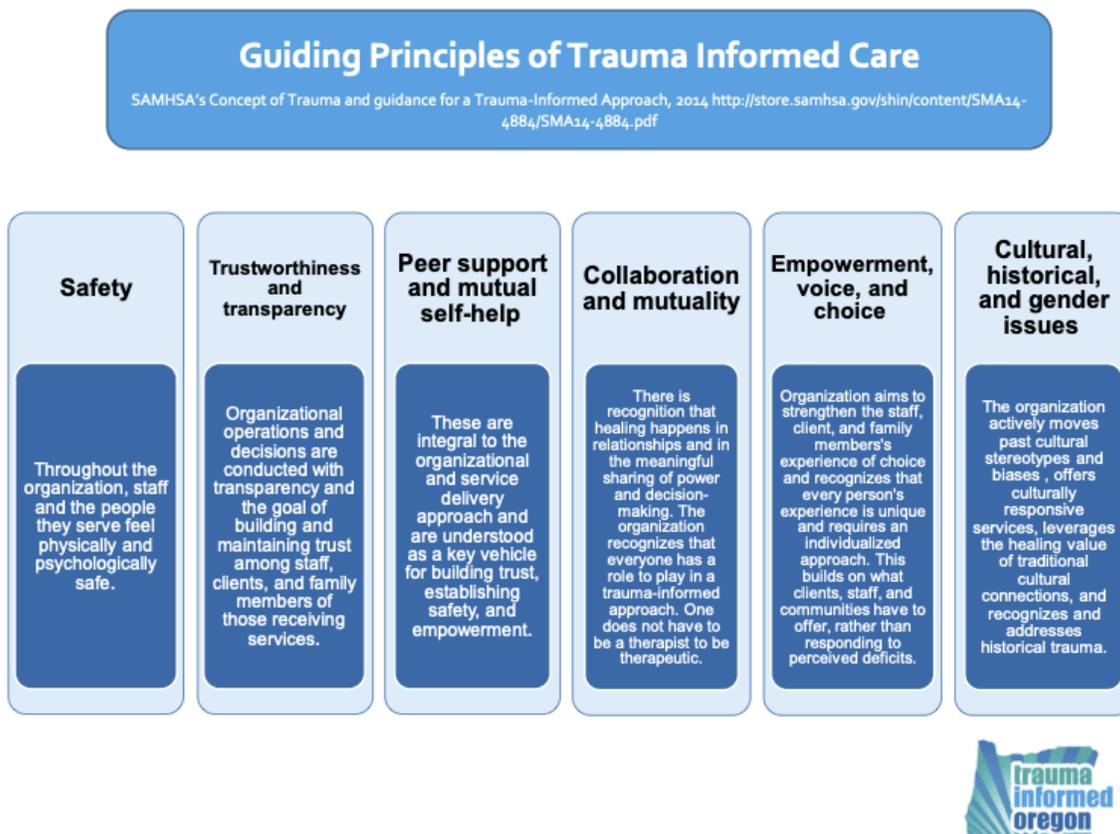
Approaching refugees

Refugees are a tremendously diverse population in terms of education, social and economic status, not to mention culture, language and ethnicity. At times tensions between different groups of refugees and migrants might arise due to conflicts between their ethnic or religious groups in their home countries. The smaller scale replication of the dynamics of the conflict from the country or origin is not excluded. Firmly focusing on the common narrative of the production process should help easing the tensions. Consultation with experienced NGOs will also help.

It should be taken into account that refugees might come with different traumatic experiences. Those might make them distrustful, sometimes oversensitive, and fearful. We have to be aware

of those characteristics when dealing with such groups of people and we have to show our understanding of their situation. Training on trauma-informed approach would be advisable.

Trauma informed approach includes:



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Culturally sensitive approach and mainstreaming interculturality:

Upon arrival in the new environment, refugees face a new culture, language, different way of communicating, different values, moral codes, unwritten rules of conduct, way and rhythm of life. Work on improving cultural competency and intercultural sensitivity helps to more effectively communicate and engage in relationships with refugees.

PRACTICAL MEASURE 12:

Suggested solutions:

- Organise a special training on trauma informed approach for the employees.

²⁸ <https://traumainformedoregon.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Principles-of-Trauma-Informed-Care.pdf>

UNEMPLOYMENT WITHIN THE REFUGEE POPULATION

Addressing unemployment is very much important as work provides not only a pay-check but also a foundation to integrate into the social fabric. Refugees take up to 20 years to reach the same employment levels as nationals in Europe, as they confront downward social mobility, skills mismatches, and a loss of recognition of their previous credentials. Language barriers and lack of supportive social and professional networks further hinder integration.

According to new changes in the Labor Market Regulations Act, an unemployed person who is a third-country national **must** know the Slovene language, as evidenced by obtaining a publicly valid certificate of successful completion of the Slovene language exam at entry level (level of difficulty A1) no later than **12 months after registering with ESS (Employment Service of Slovenia) as an unemployed person.**

Some of the refugees and migrants (TCN) are being erased from the Employment Service register for not passing the Slovene language exam on A1 level, which leaves them unable to receive financial social welfare support, which is existentially crucial for many of them.

This change is critical, especially for families where parents had not have access to formal education in their countries and have difficulties learning the language. With this in mind,we propose special attention is kept on those whenever possible.

Changes in the law adopted in the last year and coming into power recently aim to put pressure on refugees to integrate into society more quickly and efficiently. Learning the Slovene language, entering the job market and not being dependent on welfare state allowances.

CERTIFICATION AND WIDENING OF EMPLOYMENT POSSIBILITIES

Refugees face numerous problems in the host countries when seeking recognition of their education, qualifications and skills that they acquired in their countries of origin. When fleeing from either wars or running away from persecutions, refugees often can not take with them

original certificates of education or other documentation required by ENIC NARIC center²⁹, which issues recognition and assessment of education in Slovenia. Often they can not receive their original certificates and proof of education from their countries of origin, as they are banned from contacting the authorities of their country due to international protection status.

EMPLOYMENT SERVICE OF RS

PRACTICAL MEASURE 13:

Center Rog should look into already existing possibilities that would support their collaboration with the refugee population.

There are opportunities such as subsidised programmes that enable on-the-job training for persons with international protection, temporary protection and foreigners. This kind of state-subsidised programmes would further enable Center Rog to collaborate with refugees. Center Rog should proactively search for information on what kind of governmental support is possible and keep in contact with the Employment Service of Slovenia in order to be informed about different possibilities available.

Currently running programmes of ZRSZ:

On-the-job training (UDM - *usposabljanje na delovnem mestu za osebe z mednarodno zaščito, začasno zaščito in tujce*) for persons with international protection, temporary protection and foreigners) - **for 6 months Employment Office pays to both the trainee (refugee in this case) and the mentor (Center Rog in this case)**. This offers an opportunity to meet and know the person in the working environment much better. It further offers an opportunity to the refugee to get work experience and to learn the Slovene language in the work setting.

Social activation programme: implements workshops that prepare for entering job market. Društvo ODNOS currently has a European Social Funds program running aimed at women with migrant backgrounds. It also includes a certain period of obligatory paid on-the-job training.

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<https://www.gov.si/en/state-authorities/ministries/ministry-of-education-science-and-sport/about-us/higher-education-directorate/enic-naric-center/>

WOMEN REFUGEES

Fall into two groups according to their legal status:

1. Those who came as reunified family members and are treated according to the Foreigners Act. They are not entitled to the same rights as refugees (e.g. they don't receive 400 hours of the Slovenian language from the government office, instead they can receive 180 hours by the Employment Service of Slovenia and 70 by the Administrative unit).

Experience in working with refugees show that women who have children tend to be more inclined to be dedicated to childcare and housework (can see this mostly with Afghani women). They do not necessarily tend to be included in society and activities outside the household or her close community counterparts.

For those women, engaging in any activities outside the household would be hugely beneficial from the perspective of connecting with locals, practising language and overcoming isolation, and gaining self-esteem in a new surrounding.

2. Women with other backgrounds (e.g. Palestinian, Iranian) who reached higher levels of education and those who came to Slovenia by themselves to seek protection are frequently more proactive and look for opportunities for upskilling and further education.

In our research, women were more drawn towards traditional female crafts and preferred textile lab and cooking lab, some also multimedia. Younger women without children tend to be more interested in acquiring new skills and knowledge.

PRACTICAL MEASURE 14:

Suggested solutions:

- Center Rog should proactively encourage women (with the help of community leaders) with special focus on those who came through family reunification programme, especially because they have even less hours of Slovene language and also because the integration can be even a bigger challenge due to family obligations. First years are highly important for their integration, and state run integration programmes don't offer enough of support to allow them to integrate into the new country. Center Rog should further focus on drawing upon their will to learn, but also upon their knowledge and resources - taking into account their experience, traditional or non-traditional knowledge and expertise and do as much as possible to empower them both as mentors and learners.
-

LANGUAGE BARRIER

PRACTICAL MEASURE 15:

Interpretation into the native languages (e.g. Arabic, Farsi) would be welcome, especially for the inclusion of asylum seekers and those in the early stages of integration.

Proposed solutions:

- Up to one year after receiving the protection, refugees are entitled to interpretation support by the Government office for the care and integration of migrants and through the programme that NGOs implement.
- According to their current projects also other NGOs involved in the support and integration of Refugees may assure interpretation.
- The interpretation could be made by volunteers with whom the ROG Center would sign an **agreement for volunteering**. Through the agreement of volunteering the volunteer is entitled to travel costs coverage and when he is entitled to social money support and unemployed, he will receive in additional 100 EUR by the social centre added to the monthly sum of social welfare support.
- Engagement of trained and experienced **Intercultural mediators** or **community interpreters** - those two profiles are certified by the **Social Chamber of RS (Socialna zbornica Slovenije)** and are included in NPK (national professional qualification) system. There is a special qualification NPK for **Arabic, Farsi, Albanian and Ukrainian** community interpreters. Engaging them you would make sure to have reliable and trained interpreters.

As much as possible the communication language should be used Slovene. It is good for them to learn English, but, if we want to help them get accepted into Slovene society, Slovene is a must. They will need to master it on a certain level to acquire a job, to stay signed to Employments service and receive social help after one year from their first registration, and we aren't doing them a favour by speaking to them in English.

At Društvo Odnos we had seen cases in our practice when refugees who didn't learn Slovene after years of living here were forced to pay high amounts of money for translators just to be able to communicate with health workers or to pass a driving license. This made them very vulnerable for exploitation.

YOUNG REFUGEES

Youngsters, who come to Slovenia younger than 15 years, may enrol in elementary school with regular programmes. They get an opportunity to be included in the school system and learn the language and meet their Slovenian counterparts. They usually learn the Slovenian language very quickly and continue their education in high school.

Those who arrive older than 15 years are only entitled to attend elementary school for adults, where the class consists mainly of refugees and foreigners. It is not easy for them to finish all 9 years and a lot of them drop out. They are mostly between 16 and 23 years of age and still search for balance in their life. This group actually falls out from the regular school system and therefore have less opportunities to integrate successfully into the society.

It is especially hard for **unaccompanied minors**, who come to Slovenia without caregivers, some at the age of 13 and are accommodated in the dormitory that implements the Pilot project for the accommodation of UM in Postojna. Although there are a number of teachers present continuously in the dorm, they still are under institutional care and being without parents leaves developmental and emotional gaps.

With them, they are bringing a “baggage” of traumatic experiences. That is why they need support to strengthen their social network, build resiliency and develop a sense of belonging and identity.

PRACTICAL MEASURE 16 - 18:

Suggested solutions:

- We strongly advocate for those two groups (young refugees and unaccompanied minors) of really vulnerable youth to be systematically included in the programmes of Center Rog.³⁰
- It would be highly desirable that the Center Rog establishes cooperation between SGLŠ in Postojna. SGLŠ in Postojna is willing to bring them to attend activities at their own costs in Ljubljana with the approval of their legal guardians in Slovenia, who are appointed to them by the Center for social work.
- Center Rog should make use of their mobile unite and find a way to work with them also in Postojna, organise workshops in Postojna or assure funds to cover their travel costs to Ljubljana.

³⁰ Legal guardians of unaccompanied minors stress that unaccompanied minors need to be given more opportunities to extend their knowledge and skills, which would give them new perspectives and ideas into their future. This is very important for their long term integration.

A statement of a refugee who came to Slovenia at the age of 13 from the field research. *“I would like to get to know all the areas because I am young and I have not had the opportunity to go to school in Afghanistan, so I know nothing. It is also important to me because I would like to be able to focus on one area in my life that interests me and I am good at, so I would like to try as many crafts as possible”*.³¹

FINANCIAL ASPECT

As mentioned earlier, refugees in the early stages of the integration process do not have their own means of living and are supported by the government.

PRACTICAL MEASURE 19:

Suggested solutions:

- enabling free access to Center Rog’s learning programmes for unemployed refugees

PRACTICAL MEASURE 20:

FORMING GROUPS

- When including women refugees we should take into account their culture, religion and beliefs and respect them. E.g. when including traditional women refugees it should be considered to that forming gender homogeneous groups might encourage women refugees from traditional backgrounds in the initial phase as they might feel safer. However it is highly advisable to invite local women to those workshops, too. Women groups would also have psychologically supportive functions.

PRACTICAL MEASURES – SHORT AND LONG TERM

Strategies to address those challenges through Center Rog's capacity and mechanisms to address the challenges

PRACTICAL MEASURES 21 - 25

Short term

³¹ Please find more comments and quotes from refugees (section Refugee Comments and Suggestions) here: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1xDA2ZqulyTGsbm7G2vRZZKicmpqf6rrJ/edit#heading=h.1139fot6pae9>

1. Monthly tours for refugees and asylum seekers, leaflets in different languages refugees/asylum seekers understand. Information in different languages (brochures and intercultural mediators) for asylum seekers and refugees should reach them as soon as possible after their arrival, so it is advisable to step in contact with Asylum Reception facilities and Asylum Centers, so they can inform the asylum seekers and refugees about Center Rog facilities early on, and also about the possibility to visit and use the facilities for free.

Long term

1. Establish cooperation with stakeholders. Establish cooperation with the Employment Service of Slovenia and the Government office for care and integration of refugees (department for integration). Continuously working hand in hand with at least one organization active in the field of refugees.
2. Organize small group workshops with intercultural mediators (max. e.g. women, youngsters...)
3. Proactively support refugees that have been active in previous ROG community and are interested in collaborating in creative activities in Center Rog.
4. Certification (issuing certificates of the knowledge gained will motivate Center Rog visitors)

5.2 Spanish Speaking Community³²

Key challenges

The majority of the population of Latin Americans in Slovenia are women who have married Slovenian men and have decided to live here.

Once they are here, they have to adapt to the language, climate, food, and traditions, manage a relationship that is followed by the arrival of children, and try to get a sufficient income for the family among other factors.

Knowing that in Latin American culture, is based on permanent contact with your loved ones, friends and acquaintances, has made social contact imperative in our heritage as the main factor in the development of the individual.

³² Author of this section: Giovanna Paola Severino Gutierrez

When arriving to live here, this is minimized by the dependency that is generated towards the couple, taking away the woman's ability to empower herself, under the excuse of a patriarchal society.

Key challenges - Latinsko Društvo

Language barrier	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accepting the learning process in the laboratories in native language, at the initial stage of training. • Employ latinoamerican mentors, or members of the Latin community that generate "engagement"
Difficulty connecting to the labor market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish intermediation with ZZS so that the training in CR is certified, which allow validating work experience in Slovenia. • Create spaces for networking between creatives, entrepreneurs and government offices that encourage the generation of commercial links.
Dependence on the partner that prevents empowerment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage female participation in workshops, talks, training, etc... • Make women who use laboratories to participate in decision-making processes
Administrative procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate physical spaces where the community can be trained in terms of bureaucratic documentation, social empowerment (Welcome Guide LD). • Train mentors in CR on the subject like empathy in interaction with foreigners who do not speak the Slovenian language.

PRACTICAL MEASURE 26:

Center Rog can help us print some welcome guides for the Spanish speaker (is already in digital format):

<https://latinoamericanoseneslovenia.eu/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/DOCUMENTO-FINAL-Guidi%CC%81a-de-Orientacio%CC%81n-Ba%CC%81sica.docx.pdf>

In this way we can give people the option to train on everyday issues of life in Slovenia, thus providing the opportunity to empower themselves with the necessary support material for their integration...something like a pilot launch.

PRACTICAL MEASURES 27 - 31:

Challenge: Language barrier

Solution:

- Accepting the learning process in the laboratories in native language, at the initial stage of training.
- Employ Latin-American mentors, or members of the Latin community that generate "engagement"

Challenge: Difficulty connecting

to the labor market:

Solution:

- Establish intermediation with ZZZS so that the training in CR is certified, which allows validating work experience in Slovenia.
- Create spaces for networking between creatives, entrepreneurs and government offices that encourage the generation of commercial links.

Challenge: Dependence on the partner

Solution:

- Encourage female participation in workshops, talks, training, etc...
- Make women who use laboratories to participate in decision-making processes

Challenge: Administrative procedures

Solution:

- Facilitate physical spaces where the community can be trained in terms of bureaucratic documentation, and social empowerment by socialising the document already prepared by Latinsko Društvo: Welcome Guide LD).

<https://latinoamericanoseneslovenia.eu/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/DOCUMENTO-FINAL-Gui%CC%81a-de-Orientacio%CC%81n-Ba%CC%81sica.docx.pdf>

- Train mentors in CR on the subject like empathy in interaction with foreigners who do not speak the Slovenian language.

Strategies to address those challenges through Center Rog's capacity

PRACTICAL MEASURES 32 -35

SHORT AND LONG TERM

Short term: Organise workshops in Spanish, or in English. where the mentors in accompaniment with the community leaders can transmit the knowledge efficiently in Spanish, at least in the initial stage of the workshops. We can create creative workshops in a living space where our community can feel welcomed and from there take the leap.

Mid term: Provide a physical space to Latinsko Društvo, so that Latinsko društvo can organize monthly face-to-face meetings to train our community in social empowerment, and at the end, a

tour of the Center Rog facilities is organised to recognise the laboratories, machinery and tools that they have available

Long term:

-Maintain contact with those who have participated and learning in Center Rog programs, to engage them as mentors, and connect them with potential sponsors for the execution of the ideas and projects that they have.

- CR should organize fairs with the accompaniment of the communities on the products that are generated in the laboratories and that are going to be shown, exhibited and finally sold in these fairs.

5.3 Turkish Speaking Community³³

Key challenges

- The most visible problem of the community is the language. (People who fled from Turkey)
- Then the appearance of the women (headscarf) is in the second place.
- There are also plenty of cultural differences between Turkey and Slovenia. That makes Turkish people very vulnerable in Slovenia. When Turks have communal life, Slovenes have an individual life.
- There are also effect of bad reputations of the Turks in history. The Ottomans' i.e. the Turks' invasions/irruptions into the Slovene countries lasted from 1408 to 1719, over three hundred years.³⁴ The history lessons in the public schools still show the Turks as an enemy and inferior. That makes a lot of stereotypes and bubbles in society.

³³ Author of this section: Furkan Guner

³⁴ Examples:

- Bitka pri Sisku (Tur'k če vzal nam Sisek bode) / The Battle of Sisak (If the Turk Takes Sisak from Us)
- Lavdon zavzame Beograd / Stoji, stoji tam Beli grad / Lavdon occupies Belgrade / Belgrade Stands There.

Key challenges - Turkish Speaking Community

Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizing slow-motion workshops in Slo. Having cooking etc. courses to encourage them.
Appearance of Women (headscarf)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Giving them a chance to perform in public. Letting them be visible in media and life.
Cultural Differences (communal life vs individual life)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creating atmospheres where they can discover. Finding community workers to help them learn.
Bad Reputation of Turks in History	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Letting them express their feeling about Slovenia. Empower them to show good sides of them.

Proposed Solutions to the Key Challenges - Turkish Speaking Community

PRACTICAL MEASURES 36 -39

1. Language:

- Organizing slow-motion workshops in Slovenian Language.
- Having cooking etc. courses to encourage them to perform their knowledge.

2. Appearance of Women (headscarf)

- Giving them a chance to perform in public.
- Letting them be visible in Slovenian society.

3. Cultural Differences (communal life vs individual life)

- Creating atmospheres where they can discover.
- Finding community workers to help them learn.

4. Bad Reputation of Turks in History

- Letting them express their feelings about Slovenia.
- Empower them to show the good sides of them.

- **Strategies to address those challenges through Center Rog's capacity and mechanisms to address the challenges**

PRACTICAL MEASURES 40 - 47:

Short term:

- Giving them free courses supported with translations in Center Rog to activate them.
- Letting them to use the labs for free or with a lower price to implement their activities.
- Usage of conference rooms or spaces for their meetings and activities to be outside.

Mid term:

- Having intercultural activities such as cooking club etc. as many as possible.
- Letting them teach the Turkish language to Slovene people in Center Rog.
- Letting them have cultural courses such as marbling art or knitting course or needlework (lace) course.

Long term:

- Support them financially, maybe under some projects to have their own brands and maybe shops.
 - Disseminating their products, brands works in public with social media and other tools to help them to get more attention to their work.
-

6 Cross-community Challenges and How Can They Be Addressed

PRACTICAL MEASURES 48 - 62:

1. Each community with which Center Rog actively collaborates should be offered an opportunity to organise regular tours to Center Rog for their community members. Tours should be implemented monthly. They should be organised by community leaders in collaboration with Center Rog staff. Center Rog should design a calendar for possible visits of different communities to Center Rog, the visits should be implemented on continuous rotating bases.

In those tours, community members will get a chance to “break the ice” so to speak and visit Center Rog for the first time within the safe environment of his/her community. This will also be an opportunity to sign up for Center Rog membership which could be a language challenge for some.

For those visits, Center Rog should arrange regular dates (1 per month) with different communities. The labs should be open, and mentors in the production lab should be informed and ready to show the production lab workflow. Therefore communities should be able to enter and engage with production labs during their tours.

2. Center Rog brochures should be translated and printed in different languages (Arabic, Farsi, Ukrainian, Spanish, Turkish, and in later years also in others, depending on the number of communities Center Rog collaborates with) so the information about Center Rog will be available also in the native languages of the migrant and refugee population.
 3. All the relevant up-to-date information regarding the workshops, activities in the labs etc should be available on the Rog Center website both in Slovene and English language. Add Google Translate Button on Center Rog webpage. Key information about Center Rog should be made available on the Center Rog webpage also in the languages of the communities Center Rog is collaborating with.
 4. When migrants and refugees are visiting the workshops and activities, the pace and the complexity of the language should be adapted to their needs. Therefore we propose the mentors adjust the pace and complexity of the language to the needs of the group. The language level of the visitors should be taken into consideration by the mentors working in the labs.
 5. The basic procedures that apply to specific labs and safety measures should be visualised in the labs. Furthermore, visualised basic procedures and safety measures should be put
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on a visible spot within the labs. In this way that also migrants and refugees will be able to comprehend the guidelines in a more accessible way. As a general rule, the procedures and safety measures should be presented in an understandable and approachable way also for the population who might have difficulties understanding the language.

6. Certificated validation of the knowledge and experience gained in Center Rog workshops was stressed as important by all communities and should be therefore taken as an important measure to apply. This would support migrants and refugees towards integration into the labour market and motivate them to participate in Center Rog considerably.
 7. Offer regular monthly or bi-weekly opportunities for representatives of different communities to organise culinary-cultural events open for the public. Those events should be focused on the presentation of the culture of migrant and refugee populations and will attract both migrant/refugee community members and the locals. This will not only add to the diversity of the daily life of Center Rog, but also enable so-called “positive interactions” which are essential for the target populations to become regular users of Center Rog, and not only visitors.
 8. Offer a limited number of free-of-charge learning opportunities for refugee and migrant populations in production labs and workshops offered by Center Rog on a continuous basis.
 9. Enable migrant and refugee communities to organise their activities such as language and conversation courses in the CR’s multi-purpose room on a regular basis. Allocate regular dates for each community Center Rog collaborates with.
 10. Invite NGOs, migrant and refugee communities to organise different activities aimed at supporting refugees and migrants in their integration into Slovene society in the premises of Center Rog, such as for example nonformal language courses for mothers with children in the public park. Center Rog should work hand in hand with community leaders / NGOs to find volunteers who design and organise the activities, to address the existent and relevant needs of migrant and refugee population.
 11. Center Rog’s multifunctional space should be designed in a way that will be able to offer maximum flexibility in terms of rearranging elements in the space according to different needs. Many of the needs that communities have or will have might not be mapped out or are not yet considered at this pre-implementation phase. Therefore ensuring maximum flexibility of the multifunctional space will play an important role in addressing the diverse needs of different communities. In this way, the multifunctional space can be used according to the diverse spectrum of needs of the communities.
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12. Allowing migrant and refugee communities to use Center Rog's multifunctional space for their diverse activities (meetings, language lessons for their members, etc.) will not only support those communities, but promote Center Rog among the members of migrant and refugee communities at the same time. In this way it will be easier for migrant and refugee members to adopt Center Rog as open and welcoming space. This will support those members who might be otherwise hesitant to come to Center Rog to "break the ice" so to speak and visit Center Rog for the first time, accompanied by their community members, which will make them feel safer.

 13. Reach out to different Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Slovenia and encourage them to send students to implement workshops and/or develop their projects in Center Rog as volunteers, specifically addressing the needs of migrant and refugee communities. Encourage students to meet and work with communities Center Rog is working with, to help the students better understand the challenges, facilitate the process of students meeting with representatives of those communities, if possible, also facilitate the process of searching for innovative solutions. In this way, civic engagement is promoted among students through volunteering on one hand, and the students have the potential to create a positive impact on the diverse communities in the local environment through connecting both to real-world problems and needs on the other, and can offer free opportunities for migrants and refugees to visit workshops implemented by students - volunteers. This complements the knowledge gained at the Faculty /HEI in a way that the students better understand real-life challenges, work with communities hand in hand and proactively search for solutions.

 14. We suggest that Center Rog supports the process of foreign and newly arrived migrant and refugee students by offering the HEIs an opportunity for those students to develop their own projects and workshops in Center Rog that local communities would benefit from. Alligned to the contemporary concept of **service learning** it is suggested those activities are done as part of the students' curricula, and therefore recognised, evaluated and graded by the Faculty /HEI where the students are enrolled. By encouraging the HEIs to incorporate service learning³⁵ into their curricula, this engagement of students would be considered as

³⁵ Service Learning (Družbeno koristno učenje) is an educational method that integrates social responsibility and community engagement into a learning experience for the students. A contemporary concept of service learning is defined by the European Association for Service Learning in Higher Education (EASLHE) as "an educational approach that enhances students' civic engagement, brings them closer to different social realities while allowing them to work in a real environment. It involves structured and graded student placements in organisations in response to the needs of the community and is different from volunteering because it is part of mandatory coursework" (EASLHE, 2021). This definition of service learning includes all the key elements of contemporary service learning." taken from Community Engagement and Service Learning Guidelines for Higher Education developed within Nexus project, https://nexus4civics.eu/wp-content/uploads/sites/31/2022/05/Service-Learning-Guidelines_fv.pdf

part of the mandatory coursework³⁶. This would allow newly arrived students to develop projects in response to the needs of the community on one hand, learn the new language within this process on the other, but it would also allow for structured and graded student placement of newly arrived migrant and refugee students in Center Rog. In this way the students, the HEIs and the city would benefit.³⁷

15. Migrant and refugee students should also be invited by Center Rog to implement knowledge sharing and knowledge exchange workshops for migrant, refugee and local populations. This kind of collaboration with Faculties makes further use of the fact that migrants and refugees are knowledge carriers and promotes them as such. In this way migrant and refugee student will have an opportunity not only to get to know Center Rog, but also to share their knowledge both in their native language, and english language, making their knowledge accessible to diverse public. Those workshops should be offered to the migrant and local population free of charge.

Concluding remarks

Within first two years this strategic document should be revised on six months bases. After the initial first two years it should be revised on annual bases and adapted according to the needs of refugees and migrants, and also complemented by the challenges, knowledge and experience gained by Center Rog.

³⁶ Especially relevant within the so called Year Plus designed to help international students to adapt to the Slovenian system and culture in their first year of study in Slovenia: <https://studyinslovenia.si/study/learning-slovene/>

³⁷ Read more about the potential of service learning as a tool of integration and promotion of civic engagement of the students in the document Annex II: "Potential of Service learning - Guidelines for Center Rog" prepared as an accompanying document to this strategic document.

Annex to this document:

Annex I: NEEDS ASSESMENT and KNOWLEDGE MAPPING in REFUGEE, SPANISH and TURKISH SPEAKING COMMUNITIES LIVING IN SLOVENIA

Annex II: Potential of Service learning - Guidelines for Center Rog

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