

Integration program Business Lead – A fast-track for educated refugees into business life

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By Hanken & SSE Executive Education, owned by Hanken School of Economics and Stockholm School of Economics, and Epicus Ltd (Integration Social Impact Bond)



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Executive Summary: Integration program Business Lead – A fast-track for educated refugees into business life

In 2015 Finland received over 30 000 asylum seekers. Among them are educated professionals who speak several languages. Although highly educated, the language barrier, difficulties to compare matriculations and a negative approach by some in society have made the integration of refugees into the working society very difficult. Wouldn't a swift integration into Finnish working life benefit the individual, Finnish business, and society at large?

With an objective to remove obstacles for educated asylum seekers to engage with Finnish local and international businesses, or to set up their own, Hanken & SSE Executive education decided to fast-track the integration process, also pushing ourselves to get from idea to program launch in less than 6 months. Together with the partners, Hanken School of Economics and mobile learning service provider Funzi, we designed a "micro-MBA" integration program, including mentoring and internships in leading companies

For funding, we launched a crowd funding campaign, offering an opportunity for businesses in Finland to support the initiative. The initiative raised immense interest and we managed to get 40 companies on board.

The 5-month integration program, later named Business Lead, included:

- 4 live modules provided by Hanken & SSE, covering basic business topics
- an easy to use mobile learning service provided by Funzi
- a 2-month internship at one of the 40 partner companies
- mentoring provided by the Helsinki Region Chamber of Commerce.

The pilot program with 40 participants, ran from May to October 2016. The second round with yet another 40 participants, ran from June to November 2017. The plan for 2018 is to run two programs.

The impact of the program has been twofold:

1. Educated asylum seekers, refugees and immigrants have been fast tracked into Finnish business life. 40 % of program participants in 2016 either found a place to work or study immediately after the program and in 2017 26% found a place to work.
2. Receiving companies have gained an intercultural experience, increased their diversity, and even gained new business ideas.

The program has reach also outside of Finland having been presented at the European commission as a best practice case for successful integration to be spread to other member countries.

“

This initiative has had a very positive effect on the lives of dozens of people and has turned out to be a leading initiative even on a European scale. We are aiming for mutual benefit: for companies to find competent employees or partners with language skills and for refugees to support entry into business life. We aim to spread our program, and get even more universities and companies involved in the future to reach a remarkable impact on a larger scale.

”

Marc Hinnenberg
CEO of Hanken & SSE Executive Education

1. The Challenge

The 2015 refugee crisis

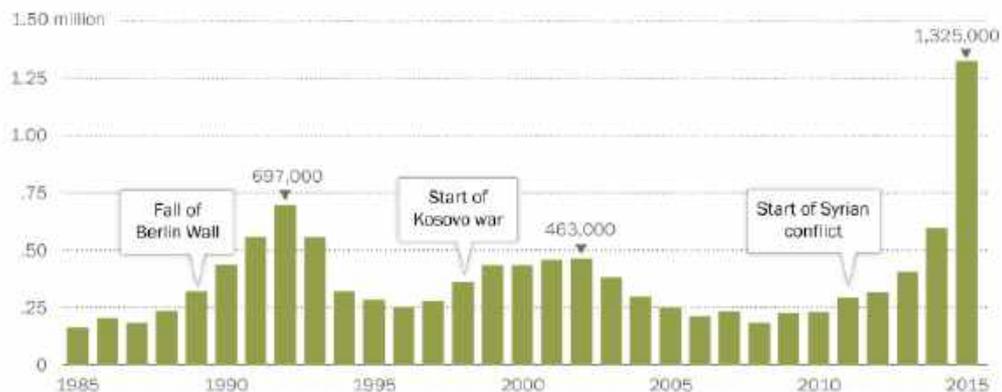
In 2015 Europe was overflooded with refugees from crisis areas in the Middle East. In Europe alone, the amount of asylum seekers more than doubled from the previous year to 1.3 million. (see Fig. 1) In Finland the number of asylum seekers ten folded from 3000 in 2014 to 32000 in 2015 (Fig. 2). For a small, remote and quite homogenous country that has not been exposed to that many immigrants and foreign people this became a kind of a crisis. In 1990 less than 30 000 foreigners lived in all of Finland and suddenly in 2015 more than this amount arrived within a few months. The current number of foreigners living in Finland is over 240 000 (Fig. 3). (For an overview of the global refugee situation in 2015, see Appendix 1)

The difference with the wave of asylum seekers in 2015 was that they came from culturally very different backgrounds compared to previous foreigners that have been coming to Finland from Northern Europe, Scandinavia, Baltics, Russia or North America. Now we had people coming from Iraq, Afghanistan, Somalia and Syria and they were refugees – not migrants.

Our immigration office was taken by surprise and refugee centres were started in every deserted old hotel building, school etc. throughout the country. At the beginning of 2015 there were 20 refugee centres in Finland with a couple of thousand inhabitants. By the end of the year 120 new centres were opened and inhabited by 27000 asylum seekers. Refugees were also hosted by churches, NGOs and in private homes. Retired police officers and police students were called in to help in the investigation of asylum applications and passport authenticity. The migration office hired 150 people more – from having been 70 – to help in the asylum application process. (YLE news 17.1.2016)

Number of asylum seekers in Europe surges to record 1.3 million in 2015

Annual number of asylum applications received by EU-28 countries, Norway and Switzerland, 1985 to 2015



Note: "Europe" consists of the EU-28, Norway and Switzerland. Asylum seeker definitions varied by European country prior to 2008. Numbers for asylum applications since 2008 are based on first-time applicants and do not include appeals or transfer of applications between countries. See [methodology](#) for more details. Data on asylum applications is missing for some countries in some years. See [Appendix A](#) for list of countries with missing data. All countries that are part of the EU today are included in previous years' data even though several were not part of the European Union in earlier years. Rounded to nearest thousand.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of Eurostat data, accessed June 22, 2016.

"Number of Refugees to Europe Surges to Record 1.3 Million in 2015"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Figure 1. Number of asylum seekers in Europe in 2015

RESEARCH CENTER

Appendix A: Asylum applications 1985 through 2015

Number of asylum applications to Europe by country and year
Annual number of asylum applications received by EU-28 countries, Norway and Switzerland, 1985 to 2015

	Austria	Belgium	Bulgaria	Croatia	Cyprus	Czech Republic	Denmark	Estonia	Finland	France
1985	7,000	5,000	—	—	—	—	9,000	—	<1,000	29,000
1986	9,000	8,000	—	—	—	—	9,000	—	<1,000	26,000
1987	11,000	6,000	—	—	—	—	3,000	—	<1,000	28,000
1988	16,000	5,000	—	—	—	—	5,000	—	<1,000	34,000
1989	22,000	8,000	—	—	—	—	5,000	—	<1,000	61,000
1990	23,000	13,000	—	—	—	—	5,000	—	3,000	55,000
1991	27,000	15,000	—	—	—	—	5,000	—	2,000	47,000
1992	16,000	18,000	—	—	—	—	14,000	—	4,000	29,000
1993	5,000	27,000	—	—	—	—	14,000	—	2,000	28,000
1994	5,000	14,000	—	—	—	—	7,000	—	<1,000	26,000
1995	6,000	11,000	—	—	—	—	5,000	—	<1,000	20,000
1996	7,000	12,000	—	—	—	—	6,000	—	<1,000	17,000
1997	7,000	12,000	<1,000	—	—	2,000	5,000	—	<1,000	21,000
1998	14,000	22,000	<1,000	—	<1,000	4,000	6,000	<1,000	1,000	22,000
1999	20,000	36,000	1,000	—	<1,000	7,000	7,000	<1,000	3,000	31,000
2000	18,000	43,000	2,000	—	<1,000	9,000	10,000	<1,000	3,000	39,000
2001	30,000	25,000	2,000	—	2,000	18,000	13,000	<1,000	2,000	47,000
2002	39,000	19,000	3,000	—	<1,000	8,000	6,000	<1,000	3,000	51,000
2003	32,000	14,000	1,000	—	4,000	11,000	4,000	<1,000	3,000	60,000
2004	25,000	12,000	<1,000	—	10,000	5,000	3,000	<1,000	4,000	59,000
2005	22,000	13,000	<1,000	—	8,000	4,000	2,000	<1,000	4,000	50,000
2006	13,000	9,000	<1,000	—	5,000	3,000	2,000	<1,000	2,000	31,000
2007	12,000	12,000	<1,000	—	7,000	2,000	2,000	<1,000	1,000	29,000
2008	—	11,000	—	—	4,000	1,000	2,000	<1,000	—	—
2009	—	17,000	—	—	3,000	<1,000	4,000	<1,000	—	42,000
2010	—	22,000	—	—	3,000	<1,000	5,000	<1,000	—	48,000
2011	—	26,000	<1,000	—	2,000	<1,000	4,000	<1,000	—	52,000
2012	—	18,000	1,000	—	2,000	<1,000	6,000	<1,000	3,000	54,000
2013	—	12,000	7,000	1,000	1,000	<1,000	7,000	<1,000	3,000	60,000
2014	26,000	14,000	11,000	<1,000	1,000	<1,000	15,000	<1,000	3,000	59,000
2015	86,000	39,000	20,000	<1,000	2,000	1,000	21,000	<1,000	32,000	71,000

Note: "Europe" consists of the EU-28, Norway and Switzerland. Asylum seeker definitions varied by European country prior to 2008. Numbers for asylum applications since 2008 are based on first-time applicants and do not include appeals or transfer of applications between countries. Data on asylum applications is missing for some countries in some years, indicated by "—". Rounded to nearest thousand.

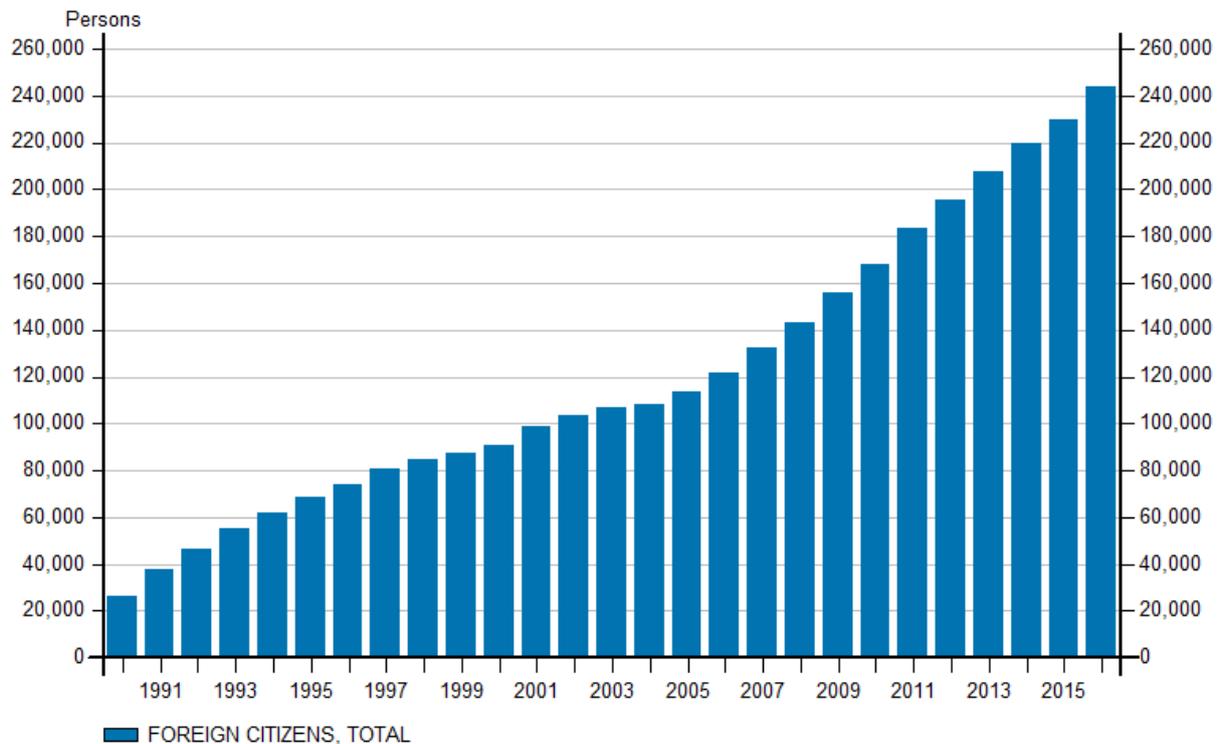
Source: Pew Research Center analysis of Eurostat data, accessed June 22, 2016.

Number of Refugees to Europe Surges to Record 1.3 Million in 2015

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Figure 2. Number of asylum seekers by country between 1984 and 2015

**Population by citizenship 1990-2016
FOREIGN CITIZENS, TOTAL**



Statistics Finland / Population structure

Figure 3: Number of foreigners residing in Finland between 1990-2016

A will to help

Seldom has there been such a huge show of volunteers wanting to help in this time of crisis. People were collecting clothes, bed sheets, sleeping bags, shoes, mobile phones etc. to support all the people that were flooding in. People collected old computers and opened internet cafés in their homes. People offered small jobs to interns at the asylum centres and offered to teach Finnish at the centres. All kinds of helping activities were going on and for many months from August 2015 the refugees were at the centre of media attention.

As a result of this need for help and support and the spirit of volunteering, Hanken & SSE Executive Education also wanted to do something good for all these people in need. With few public structures in place, we saw something was missing. We wanted to do something that was in line with our business of providing further education to professionals.

From idea to execution in less than six months

At the start-up event SLUSH (<http://www.slush.org/>) in November 2015 the idea was born. We decided to fast-track integration, with an objective to remove obstacles for educated asylum seekers to engage in Finnish business life or set up businesses themselves. From the idea born in November we aimed to go to program launch in less than six months. Without expectations, we designed an integration program together with two partners, Hanken School of Economics and mobile learning service provider Funzi.

For funding, we activated the private sector and launched a crowd funding campaign, offering an opportunity for businesses in Finland to support the initiative. The aim of the initiative was thus twofold: 1) Helping to change the lives of participating asylum seekers; and 2) offering an opportunity for companies to deepen their corporate culture, leadership, talent base and build diversity, as well as send a signal to their communities. Companies could contribute to the program fee or offer an internship position within their organisation, or both. We were overwhelmed by the immense interest this initiative raised with companies, we managed to get 40 companies on board.

Now we only needed to find the potential participants to the program, and this provided a little bit more of a challenge than we had anticipated. Here we also depended on different stakeholders like the Red Cross, Start-up Refugees and Funzi, who supported us in finding candidates fitting the criteria of having an academic degree and relevant work experience and English language skills. In April 2016 we had 70 eligible applicants of which 40 were selected to start the program in May.



The initiative feels natural for Hanken, which for a long time has been engaged in ventures involving corporate social responsibility and sustainable development. At Hanken we have several initiatives under development to support refugees to build a foundation for a future in Finland in a way that also benefits the overall society.



Karen Spens

Rector of Hanken School of Economics

2: The Commitment

Partnering up

To pull off the new program that differed quite radically from the business model of Hanken & SSE's other programs, we relied on many stakeholders for support. The main ones were Funzi, with whom we developed learning material for the mobile learning service; Helsinki Chamber of Commerce who coordinated the career mentoring for program participants; and the companies who provided the fee and internship positions for all participants. 40 companies were involved in the 2016 program (Fig. 4)



Figure 4. Integration program Business Lead company partners in 2016

In 2017 the setup was slightly different when Hanken & SSE Executive Education rerun the integration program Business Lead as part of the Epicus Kotouttaminen Social Impact Bond or Koto-SIB framework, with the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment of Finland, FIM, TE-Services and Sitra. We also continued to work with most of the company partners from the previous year (Fig. 5).



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Figure 5. Integration Program Business Lead company partners in 2017

The initiative not only raised immense interest among Finnish companies who wanted to contribute, but we also attracted a big number of pro bono speakers to the live part of the program. All in all we had twenty different facilitators, case speakers and panellists providing us content during the seven day program. Many other stakeholders also contributed to the program, going out of their way to overcome bureaucratic obstacles to locate potential candidates in refugee reception centres and so on.

“

Through the Business Lead internship, we got an understanding of new market areas and are now looking for opportunities to spread our growth venture Charge & Drive’s services also to the Middle East. The internship offers a great opportunity both for immigrants to get to know companies in Finland but also for companies to be exposed to greater diversity and other cultures. Fortum was a Business Lead program partner also last year and one of the interns still works with us.

”

Heli Antila
VP, Chief Technology Officer of Fortum

Internship in a Finnish company

The internships in a company in Finland was for many applicants one of the most valuable parts of the integration program. It lasted for a two-month period after the live modules were completed.

As we had participants with a variety of backgrounds, it was a big job to match all participants with a relevant internship company. The main idea was to find the best match possible for the intern and the company.

3: The learning and development Initiative

Program objective, learning goals and content

The first Business Lead program in 2016 was targeted towards asylum seekers with a Bachelor level degree as a minimum and who spoke a good level of English. Our initial idea was that the contents of the program would reflect a “micro-MBA”, covering business related areas like, European business landscape and culture, business strategy and entrepreneurship, financial management and self-leadership, as well sales, marketing and customer understanding.

If we wanted these people to integrate fast into society, we believed that what they needed was to be *empowered*, so we aimed at empowering participants to take charge of their own future and professional development. We wanted them to get back to perceiving themselves as professionals with knowledge and experiences that are useful and needed, also here in Finland and to get out of the “asylum-seeker/refugee”-mindset. We wanted to equip them with the necessary knowledge, skills and tools to manage here. As many participants had been isolated in remote asylum centres with almost no contact to the rest of the world for up to 8-9 months, seemed quite hopeless during the first live module in May 2015.

Main program objective:

To empower asylum seeking participants to actively and meaningfully take part in Finnish business/working life in a variety of roles, e.g. employee, manager, expert, or entrepreneurial roles, depending on their own knowledge, education, background and experiences.

Learning goals:

1. To provide participants with an understanding of Finnish/European business life, business/working culture, and basic rights and obligations
2. To provide participants with basic business skills and relevant business vocabulary needed to discuss and do business with future stakeholders
3. To provide concrete tools to function effectively in a variety of roles in the Finnish business environment
4. To empower participants to integrate into Finnish working life in a way that is meaningful for them.



When I met the participants during the first module I was struck by the participants’ thirst for knowledge about Finnish society and the European way of life. Most of them had spent 7-9 months in the country, but they knew fairly little about the surrounding society.



Pernilla Gripenberg

Program Director at Hanken & SSE Executive Education

The program focused on the following main topics:

- European business landscape, factors influencing business operations in Europe and Finland (history, political, legal and economic systems, culture)
- Working in Europe and Finland: national culture, cultural differences and business etiquette, basics of Finnish labour law, taxation and worker's rights and obligations,
- Organisational behaviour from a cultural perspective: roles, teamwork, motivation, hierarchy, gender equality etc
- Business strategy and entrepreneurship, business models and competitiveness, business development, establishing a company
- Leadership, how to lead myself and be efficient and how to lead others, leadership styles and cultural differences in leadership
- Financial management and accounting, understanding financial statements, earnings logics, profitability, and key figures and ratios
- Sales, marketing and customer understanding in a Western/Finnish business environment, how to market and sell to Finns, consumer demographics and behaviour, digital channels, global trends

The program also included a CV/job searching clinic, a pitching clinic, and panels with invited guests with an immigration background, who came and shared their experiences of working and being entrepreneurs in Finland.

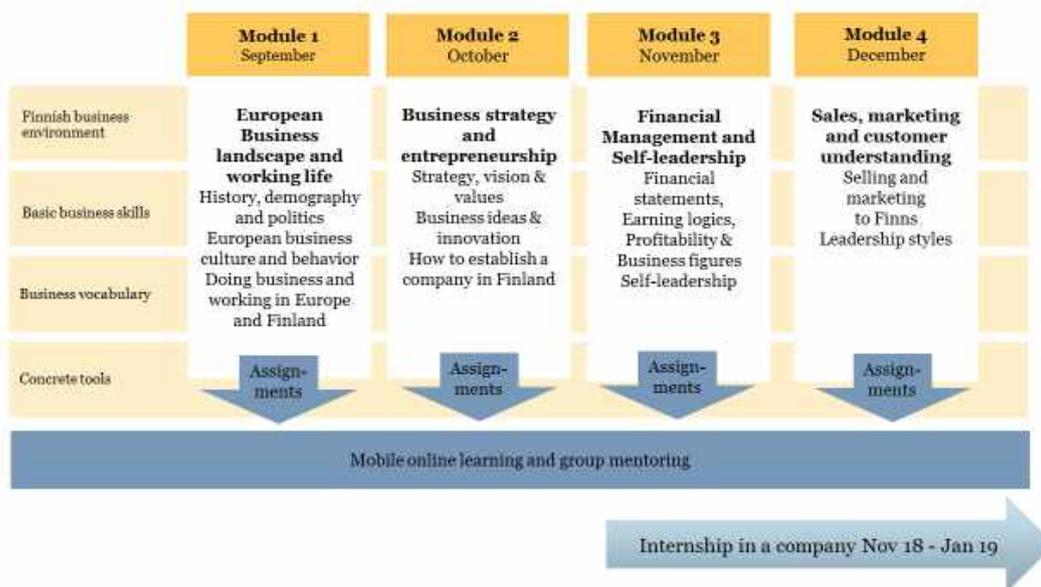


Figure 6. Program overview

Mobile learning and group mentoring

Parallel to the live modules, we had the Funzi mobile learning service providing learning courses prior to coming to the live modules. The level of business skills and understanding among participants varied quite substantially, so with this we aimed to establish a ground level of basic understanding of the topics to be covered in class. We developed all the learning material in close collaboration with Funzi, so that we provided the content and they supported us in producing it in a bite-sized, easy-to-read and digest format, with matching pictures and photos to support the learning. Producing all the material from scratch between February and April was quite a push, but with the help of a student assistant hired to write the material under our guidance, it worked out very well. (See Fig. for example of the look and feel of the content)

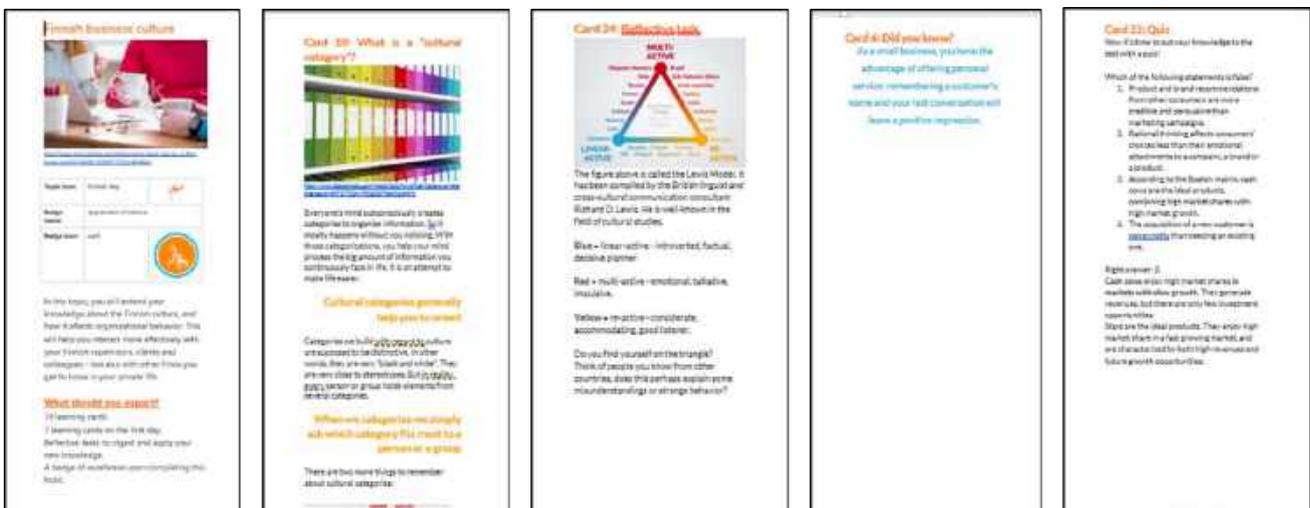


Figure 7. Examples of content in the Funzi mobile learning service for Business Lead

Parallel to the two-month internship period, we offered group mentoring to participants, coordinated by Helsinki Region Chamber of Commerce. Through them participants gained access both to a business oriented mentor and a more “life in Finland” mentor. Mentors and participants met 4-5 times during the period and most found it very valuable to their integration, even though the mentoring period was rather short. In 2017 we were approached by the Helsinki Rotary Club who wanted to provide mentoring to participants. In 2018 we are continuing with the Rotary Club and are planning to extend the mentoring relationship to the whole five-month period. All mentors have been mentoring on a voluntary basis.

“

This program is just great, it is the first step in starting my new life in Finland. I am so excited and look to learn a lot about the working environment in Finland

“

Program participant Moataz Jalal Mohammed from Iraq



Figure 8. Strategy session with Business Lead 2016 participants

Application process and applicants

Recruitment of the relevant asylum seekers was done via the Finnish Red Cross, StartUp Refugees and The Finnish Immigration Service MIGRI. By the end of the application period more than 70 asylum seekers showed interest to take part in the first program. Applications were received from candidates of 13 different nationalities, with the majority hailing from Iraq, Syria and Afghanistan. Candidates were mostly male with nine female applicants and they were between 23 and 53 years old with the majority in their late 20s. Having fit program criteria and gone through the application process, 40 educated asylum seekers were offered a place in the program. Central program criteria were a higher education degree (or at least 3 years of studies), at least 2 years of relevant work experience and English language skills. Not everyone had degree certificates to show as they had fled from their homes, or their studies had been cut short, so we had to trust them on that point. All candidates were briefly interviewed either face to face or over the phone.

Candidates had an educational background in engineering, accounting or other bachelor's or master's degree in business and good English language skills. We had participants having engineering degrees in IT, Construction, Architecture etc., degrees in Business, Journalism, Psychology and Chemistry. Some had years of work and managerial experience for example from multinational oil and IT companies.

In 2017 we changed the target group slightly, due to the Koto-SIB funding. We didn't target asylum seekers anymore but refugees and migrants who already were given a residence permit. This reduced some of the bureaucracy around refunds, insurances etc. Otherwise the application

criteria were the same and this time we had 124 applicants of which 40 were accepted to participate in the program.

“

This internship enabled us to learn more and greatly be exposed to the Finnish business culture, it also allowed us to demonstrate our competence, our skills and expertise in a very practical way to Finnish companies.

”

2016 program participant

4: The Impact

Impact for asylum seekers, refugees and immigrants

The impact of the program has been twofold. Firstly, educated asylum seekers, refugees and immigrants have been fast tracked into Finnish business life and has had a chance to prove themselves professionally at a Finnish internationally operating company, thus also building their Finnish network and references. We had 37/39 fully graduated in 2016 and 35/36 fully graduated in 2017 (some dropped out along the way, because they found other places to study or work). To our current knowledge, around 40% of Business Lead participants found a place to work/study immediately after the 2016 program and 26% found a place to work after the 2017 program.

Regarding empowerment, the transformation during the 5-month period of the program, in particular of the participants in 2016, who were all asylum seekers, was visible. During this period participants went from a state of hopelessness and despair to a regained sense of self-worth, confidence and hope for the future.

The participant feedback from the first program was heart-warming and we saw destinies being transformed. Participants doubted that they could have ever stayed and lived in this country had they not been part of the program and met our team. We shared their pains and their joys, as some got negative and others positive results on their asylum applications. We felt a level of gratitude we had never felt before.

Researchers from Hanken are following the program to study the longer-term impact of the program on the participants, their placement professionally in Finland or elsewhere.

Impact for company partners

Secondly, receiving companies have gained an intercultural experience, they might never have had a chance to gain. In addition to being part of something meaningful, they have increased their diversity and in some companies, this have led to new business ideas that otherwise would not have happened.

Through the interaction with the program participants the partner companies could familiarize themselves with another culture and expand their world view. In return program participants challenged existing company cultures and practices, and gave managers a reason to reflect on activities in the companies that perhaps are taken for granted.

When the first program came to a completion with a diploma ceremony in October 2016, we heard participants, mentors and company representatives share their experiences of the program. One main learning point for mentors and company representatives was perhaps the most obvious: asylum seekers are just like any other professional. They are all individuals and have dreams about a family, a good job and their own home.

Comments from the participants 2016 & 2017:

meaningfulness, purpose of life, a community that treated us as professionals, not only as asylum seekers, new business capabilities and cultural understanding, clearly improved my future opportunities in working life, invaluable experience, great networking, I have developed my business skills and vocabulary, I was able to get a temporary job thanks to the program



Figure 9. Business Lead 2016 participants and Hanken & SSE's team ending the live program

Comments from the internship companies 2016 & 2017:

We wanted to teach our employees to meet people from other cultures and to teach trainees about Finnish business culture and the objectives were met, to add diversity to the team and to inspire creativity through interaction with the intern, the whole program was a wonderful idea, we were privileged to participate, our expectations were well met as our intern was hard-working and he brought new ideas, expectations were met really well as our trainee proved to be really resourceful and a fast learner, the program exceeded our expectations what comes to the skills fit and enthusiasm and engagement that the intern showed towards their professional development and work itself



Figure 10. The Business Lead program has attracted a lot of media attention, links in Appendix 2.

Beyond local impact

The program is pioneering social innovation and it has raised awareness also outside the borders of Finland. Because of the initiative, we were invited to speak at the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights Forum 2016 in Vienna, on the business case for better refugee and migrant integration that can contribute to Europe's growth. In 2017 we also took part in founding discussions of the Business Refugee Action Network (BRAN) in London.

Further plans are to spread the concept as a tool to fast-track integration of educated asylum seekers Europe wide. The first steps have already been taken and partnerships have been formed with a university in The Netherlands and a business school in Germany.

Links and references

References:

Pew Research Center (2016). Number of Refugees to Europe Surges to Record 1.3 Million in 2015. Available at: <http://www.pewglobal.org/2016/08/02/number-of-refugees-to-europe-surges-to-record-1-3-million-in-2015/> retrieved 22 January 2018.

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YLE news 16.1.2016, <https://yle.fi/news/3-8595369>, retrieved 22 January 2018

Links:

Program Website:

<http://www.hankensse.fi/executive-education/social-impact/>

Blog posts around the Business Lead program (Blog texts also found in Appendix 3):

Program director's reflections 2016

<http://blog.hankensse.fi/integration-program-business-lead-a-will-to-integrate>

Program partner and participant interview 2016

<http://blog.hankensse.fi/stop-whining-and-start-acting>

Program participant interview 2017

<http://blog.hankensse.fi/working-for-an-increasingly-diverse-finland>

More material on Twitter in the hashtags:

#BusinessLead2016

<https://twitter.com/search?f=tweets&q=%23businesslead2016&src=typd>

#BusinessLeadImpact

<https://twitter.com/search?f=tweets&q=%23businessleadimpact&src=typd>

Appendix 1: Overview of the global refugee situation in 2015

GLOBAL LEADER ON
STATISTICS ON REFUGEES

Trends at a Glance

2015 IN REVIEW

Global forced displacement has increased in 2015, with record-high numbers. By the end of the year, 65.3 million individuals were forcibly displaced worldwide as a result of persecution, conflict, generalized violence, or human rights violations. This is 5.8 million more than the previous year (59.5 million).

65.3 MILLION FORCIBLY DISPLACED WORLDWIDE

If these 65.3 million persons were a nation, they would make up the 21st largest in the world.

- 21.3 million persons were refugees
 - 16.1 million under UNHCR's mandate
 - 5.2 million Palestinian refugees registered by UNRWA
- 40.8 million internally displaced persons¹
- 3.2 million asylum-seekers

12.4
MILLION

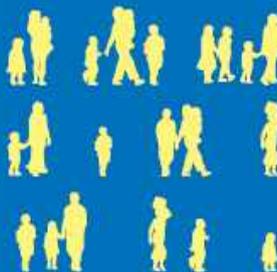
An estimated 12.4 million people were newly displaced due to conflict or persecution in 2015. This included 8.6 million individuals displaced² within the borders of their own country and 1.8 million newly displaced refugees. The others were new applicants for asylum.

3.7
MILLION

UNHCR estimates that at least 10 million people globally were stateless at the end of 2015. However, data recorded by governments and communicated to UNHCR were limited to 3.7 million stateless individuals in 78 countries.

¹ Source: Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) of the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC).
² Ibid.
³ The number of newly displaced refugees does not include applications for asylum whose refugee status has yet to be determined.

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PERSONS
EVERY MINUTE

On average 24 people worldwide were displaced from their homes every minute of every day during 2015 – some 34,000 people per day. This compares to 30 per minute in 2014 and 6 per minute in 2005.

86

PER CENT

Developing regions hosted 86 per cent of the world's refugees under UNHCR's mandate. At 13.9 million people, this was the highest figure in more than two decades. The Least Developed Countries provided asylum to 4.2 million refugees or about 26 per cent of the global total.

183/1000
REFUGEES /
INHABITANTS

Lebanon hosted the largest number of refugees in relation to its national population, with 183 refugees per 1,000 inhabitants. Jordan (87) and Nauru (50) ranked second and third, respectively.

Appendix 2: Links to media coverage [mostly in Finnish]

Suomen Kuvalehti	Sijoittajille rahaa maahanmuuttajien työllistymisestä – "Tavoittelemme 8 prosentin vuosituottoa"	02 October 2017
Yrittäjät.fi	Työnantaja, kiinnostaako räätälöity koulutus – Muutamassa kuukaudessa osaavia tekijöitä	07 June 2017
Kauppalehti	Suomalaisyrietykset sitoutuivat työllistämään maahanmuuttajia - jos kokeilu epäonnistuu, sijoittajat häviävät	02 June 2017
Talouselämä	Yrietykset sitoutuvat maahanmuuttajien työllistämiseen - "Tärkeintä on asenne ja halu tehdä töitä"	02 June 2017
Hanken	Utbildningen öppnade nya dörrar - lyckat integrationsprogram	14 December 2016
LähiTapiola	Turvapaikanhakijoiden koulutusohjelma	20 October 2016
Helsingin Sanomat	Yrietysten rahoittama turvapaikanhakijoiden työharjoittelu saattaa loppua – "Täällä tarvitaan aktiivisia ihmisiä"	11 October 2016
Svenska Yle	Businesskurs ger asylsökande chans att komma in på arbetsmarknaden	10 June 2016
Ramirent	Ramirent takes part in programme supporting integration of asylum seekers to Finnish society	18 May 2016
Helsingin Sanomat	Nyt poimitaan pätevimät pikavauhtia Suomen työelämään – yrietykset ideoivat koulutusohjelman turvapaikanhakijoille	12 May 2016
Yle	Korkeasti koulutetut turvapaikanhakijat puhkuvat työntöä – "Haluaisin osoittaa kiitollisuuteni suomalaisille"	11 May 2016
Yle Aamu-tv	Bisneskoulutusta turvapaikanhakijoille	11 May 2016
YleX Etusivu	Turvapaikanhakijat yrietyksmaailmassa	10 May 2016
LähiTapiola	LähiTapiola tukee Hanken & SSE Executive Educationin integraatio-ohjelmaa koulutetuille turvapaikanhakijoille	10 May 2016
HBL	Hanken vill integrera asylsökande	11 February 2016
Svenska Yle	Ekonomiutbildning för asylsökande startar	11 February 2016
Kauppalehti	Hanken & SSE aloittaa turvapaikanhakijoiden kouluttamisen	11 February 2016

Appendix 3: Blogs

Blog I

A will to integrate

25 October 2016

by Pernilla Gripenberg

– the Program Director’s experiences from the Business Lead 2016 Program

Last spring Hanken & SSE Executive Education ventured out on a completely new path. We wanted to contribute to the influx of migrants into Europe and launched a completely new initiative – the integration program [Business Lead 2016](#). Our aim was to enable our client and partner companies to broaden and diversify their workforce and bring them together with English speaking professionals with the right skillset for them, while helping integrating educated asylum seekers into European working life.



The program was targeted towards asylum seekers with a Bachelor level degree as a minimum and who spoke a good level of English. We had participants join the program from many destinations - Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan, Yemen, Eritrea, Ghana, Palestine and Somalia. With participants having degrees in Engineering (IT, Construction, architecture etc.), Business, Journalism, Psychology, and Chemistry. Some of the participants had years of work and managerial experience for example from multinational oil and IT companies.

The initiative raised immense interest among Finnish companies who wanted to contribute either by financing participation fees and/or offering participants a two-month internship in their company. At one point we had more internships than participants registered for the program. We also attracted a big number of pro bono speakers. All in all we had twenty different facilitators, case speakers and panelists providing us with their valuable insight. Also many other stakeholders contributed to the program, going out of their way to overcome bureaucratic obstacles, for instance to locate potential candidates in refugee reception centers and the list goes on and on.

When I met the program participants during the first module in May, what struck me most was the participants thirst for knowledge about Finnish society and the European way of life. Most of the participants had spent 7-9 months in the country, but they knew fairly little about the surrounding society. Many had been very isolated in their reception centers, often located in remote areas.

The Business Lead Program was designed to empower participants to take charge of their own future and professional development. We also wanted them to know as much as possible about European and Finnish culture and working life in order to quickly adapt and integrate. The overall objective was *“to empower asylum seeking participants to actively and meaningfully take part in European business/working life in a variety of roles, e.g. employee, manager, expert, or entrepreneurial roles, depending on their own knowledge, education, background and experiences.”*

The program covered topics such as:

- European business landscape and working in Europe and Finland
- Business strategy and entrepreneurship, business models, business development, establishing a company
- Leadership, self-leadership, leadership styles and cultural differences
- Financial management and accounting
- Sales, marketing and customer understanding in a European business environment
- We also had a job searching clinic and a business pitching clinic for the participants

The participant feedback from the program was heartwarming and we saw destinies being transformed. Participants doubted that they could have ever stayed and lived in this country had they not been part of the program and met our team. We shared their pains and their joys, as some got negative and others positive results on their asylum applications. We felt a level of gratitude as never before.

Yesterday the program came to a completion with [a diploma ceremony](#). We heard participants, mentors and company representatives share their experiences of the program. The most striking learning point for mentors and company representatives was perhaps the most obvious: an asylum seeker is just like any other professional. They are all individuals and have dreams about a family, a good job and their own home. Through the interaction with the program participants the partner companies could familiarize themselves with another culture and expand their world view. In return program participants challenged existing company cultures and practices, and gave managers a reason to reflect on activities in the companies that perhaps are taken for granted.

I would like to quote a program participant:

“This internship enabled us to learn more and greatly be exposed to the Finnish business culture, it also allowed us to demonstrate our competence, our skills and expertise in a very practical way to Finnish companies.”

To conclude, we already have the will to integrate, now we just need more ways to make it happen. We need action. We have nothing to lose on fast-tracking integration of asylum seekers and migrants, so let’s not waste time and talent, but seize the opportunity to get new talents and perspectives into Finnish society!

[#BusinessLead2016](#)

Blog II

Stop whining and start acting

31 May 2017

by Johanna Korpia

How an Afghan asylum seeker in Helsinki got involved with the world's highest railway bridge project in India



Sanna Kulmala, HR Director at WSP Finland and Hussain Jamal, newly appointed Assistant Structural Engineer at WSP Finland sat down with me to discuss how their roads crossed and how they ended up working together in Helsinki on the [world's highest railway bridge design project in India](#).

It all began with Sanna spotting a [newspaper article last year](#) which reported on Hanken & SSE's [Business Lead program](#) for educated refugees. Fast forward three months, one of the program participants Hussain Jamal, asylum seeker in Finland and engineer from Afghanistan, started his internship at WSP Finland. WSP is always on the look-out

for new talent with specific technical skills and Hussain was on the lookout for engineering work which he had been trained for in Afghanistan. Until then, Hussain had spent the past year sitting in a service centre - waiting.

At WSP, Hussain has been working on customer projects, one of them being the world's highest railway bridge design project being built in India. For Hussain, this has meant rediscovering his professional identity and for WSP it meant finding a new key employee. Further for Finland, it meant an additional resource for our export industry. Hussain's internship has now also evolved into a permanent engineering position at WSP. So, it is very simply a win-win-win for everyone involved.

For Hussain, there has been no major surprises when entering Finnish working life since the language of engineering is global. Initially the silence of his Finnish colleagues surprised Hussain, but as time has passed the Finnish culture of open knowledge-sharing and continuous learning has made a positive impact on him.

Hussain's colleagues at WSP are very proud of their company for taking an open-minded approach to recruiting new talent. They also see Hussain's employment strengthening the company's understanding of the Middle Eastern markets.

While Hussain's story is a success story, many other similar stories are not. For most immigrants, it is difficult to enter the Finnish job market, especially for those with a refugee background. Finland's official policies and rigid processes are time-consuming, and our system assumes Finnish language skills to be critical, which inactivates most immigrants for the first years. It seems

that we prefer to support immigrants with our tax money instead of supporting them to become active taxpayers. Also in the case of Hussain and Sanna, a lot of their time together goes into processing required official work permits and documents. In this kind of process, nobody wins and everybody whines. And time just goes by.

So, how do we open up and diversify the Finnish labor market? As Sanna of WSP very well puts it, we need to change our perspective from seeing foreigners as threats and expenses to seeing them as opportunities and potential. Without this change in perspective, the Finnish export industry would be short of one very talented engineer from Afghanistan.

So remarkably, sometimes one newspaper article can really contribute to changing the world a little bit. However, the more critical part is what happens after you read the article. Do you decide to act or just continue whining? Some are willing to change the world and the impact can be seen all the way in India, where a Finnish-designed bridge is currently being built.

Hanken & SSE's integration program Business Lead 2017 for educated immigrants starts 12th of June, [more information on Business Lead here.](#)

About WSP

WSP is a design company that open-mindedly combines various areas of expertise. We help our clients to create new and repair old. We consult and design the built environment to make it enjoyable and future ready. We employ 450 experts all over Finland. In 2016, our turnover was 35 million euros. WSP in Finland is a part of the global WSP | Parsons Brinckerhoff that employs 36,500 talented people at 500 offices across 40 countries.

Blog III

Working for an increasingly diverse Finland

28 November 2017

by Swathi Kasoju

I took part in the integration program Business Lead 2017 offered by Hanken & SSE Executive Education and now as a result I am working for Accenture in Helsinki. I am Swathi Kasoju and this is my story taking me from India to Finland.



My journey started almost precisely a year ago, when I joined my recently married husband in Finland last December from India. I am a software engineer and I have been working as a senior software developer and technical lead back in India. Once in Finland, I started to look for a job and came across the [Business Lead program](#) by Hanken & SSE, through an interview with the TE office. I was very fortunate to be accepted to join the program and the path to my current role started there.

What makes me especially happy is that my career here in Finland has evolved into the path I always wanted. Previously I was doing some development work but was involved in mostly support and integrations, now I have a completely different focus working as a developer, so I switched paths completely.

While my internship focused on my career path in IT, what also helped me a lot was the broad business outlook the Business Lead program gave me. I highly appreciated that the online parts were tied into the live days, this really enforced the learnings. As me and my husband are settling here in Finland, we have a long-term plan to set up our own business. The program gave me a lot of scope and tools on how we can do research and analysis for the business that we want to set up. Finland is a very safe country, with a very high trust level and it is a very good and easy place to set up a business.

Something I keep hearing is that Finnish people don't speak out, I don't have that experience at all. Everybody is very open, honest and kind. I started off being fairly quiet since I thought that would match the expectation but quite quickly I noticed that it is not like that at all. During the internship I came out of my shell, so the experience had an impact on me also personally. In fact, it turned out quite easy to make friends in Finland, both with people from Finland and elsewhere. We go for outings and spend time together with the team I work with, I also made many friends through the Business Lead program itself.

I am very lucky to be part of Hanken & SSE and now part of [Accenture](#), in a role I really want to work in. This whole experience opened the door for me and it has given me encouragement that I can do it!

Hanken & SSE Executive Education cultivated an idea born at Slush in 2015, into an integration program for educated immigrants together with corporate partners. The initiative named Business Lead is now in its second year and is offered as a part of the Koto SIB framework. Business Lead includes live- and online learning, mentoring and a 2-month internship in a partner company in Finland. The Business Lead 2017 initiative is part of the official Finland 100 program and the program will be rerun in year 2018.