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# Mentoring as a way of integrating refugees on the labour market

– *Evidence from a Swedish pilot scheme*



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### Abstract

Mentoring of immigrants and refugees is a policy measure widely used across the world and has been so for some years. However, there is surprisingly little empirical evidence. This study investigates the impact of a mentoring programme on the labour market status of newly arrived refugees. The programme was conducted in Sweden between 2010 and 2012. The key finding of the study is that male participants after participating have moved closer to the core labour market and that there is little that relates to the content of the mentoring programme that affect the outcome.

Key words: Newly arrived refugees, mentorship, integration, labour market.

JEL: J64, J68

## Introduction

Many studies have shown that compared to natives, immigrants and their children have lower incomes, lower labour market status in relation to their education and disproportionately unemployed.<sup>1</sup> There have been many proposed explanations for these findings such as discrimination, lack of language proficiency, and the lack of a social and professional network. As a consequence recent studies have indicated that different kinds of mentoring projects could be an efficient way of integrating immigrants and refugees into the labour market.<sup>2</sup> Outside of Sweden such programmes have been implemented in e.g. the USA, Canada, Australia, France, Germany and Denmark. However, although mentorship programmes are suggested as an efficient route to labour market integration, there is surprisingly little empirical evidence for this being the case since there is a lack of genuine impact evaluations. In fact, we have, despite a thorough search in the literature, not been able to identify one single counterfactual impact evaluation of mentorship programmes targeting refugees. Nevertheless, mentoring is held up as a policy tool appropriate for integrating refugees. The aim of our study is to investigate the impact of a mentoring programme in Sweden. The programme targeted newly arrived refugees which is a group far from the core labour market. The control group is unemployed refugees not participating in the programme. In the study we also analysed the influence of different activities in the projects on the outcome.

The outline of this study is as follows. First we give a short description of the mentoring programme that is being evaluated. This description is followed by a survey of previous

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<sup>1</sup> For an overview of immigrant occupation and income in Sweden see e.g. Hammarstedt and Shukur, 2006 and 2007; Gustafsson and Zheng, 2007. Examples of studies on employment and income among the children to immigrants are Rooth and Ekberg, 2003; Behrenz et al., 2007; Hammarstedt, 2009. For an overview of the employment and income situation for immigrants and their children across countries see e.g. Zimmermann and Bauer, 2002.

<sup>2</sup> OECD (2007a, b).

evaluations of mentoring focusing on labour market outcomes. The evaluation design is then described, followed by a presentation of the data used for the evaluation. At last an account of the results of the evaluation is presented. The result of the impact assessment reveals that, given the short follow-up period, the programme to some extent seems to have the desired impact for males only. In the second part of the result section we consider how different activities carried on in the projects, such as mentoring intensity and the characteristics of the mentor influence the outcome. This analysis is limited to males, since it was only for them that effects of participating in the programme could be identified. In the last section we state our conclusion and final remarks.

## **The Swedish Mentoring programme for newly arrived refugees**

In 2010 the National Board for Youth Affairs (NBYA)<sup>3</sup> was commissioned by the Ministry of Employment to pursue an experimental programme of occupationally oriented mentorship. The appropriation to NBYA for this purpose was to be distributed among non-profit organisations for use in mentoring projects. NBYA funded nine organisations which had applied for such funding. These projects started in the second half of 2010 and finished in 2012. One objective of the mentoring programme was to encourage designated categories of newly arrived and unemployed refugees to establish themselves on the labour market or to start a business. Another objective was to make it easier for non-profit organisations and associations in civil society to take part in social efforts that would give refugees a firm position on the labour market. Since the programme targeted refugees who were registered as unemployed, it was also an instrument of labour market policy. Therefore, the Employment Service had a central role in the programme.

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<sup>3</sup> To reflect its broader role in 2014 it was renamed the Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society. What was stated in the ordinance about NBYA was changed to refer to the new authority.

The target group of the programme is refugees, others deemed in need of protection and persons granted residence permit because of exceptionally distressing circumstances.<sup>4</sup> Also included were people who had been granted residence permit by virtue of their connection to someone belonging to one of the mentioned categories. For brevity's sake, members of any one of these groups are called refugees in this study. The mentoring programme was meant for those who had stayed in Sweden for a period not exceeding five years after having been granted residence permit. The projects that were carried out by the nine organisations that had different target groups. For example, one project were intended for poorly educated, one for well-educated refugees all projects was within certain regions or countries; one of the projects catered to women.

According to the Government's ordinance, participants in the target group should be matched to mentors on basis of the refugee's previous occupation, education or experience. According to NBYA's directions, mentoring should be based on plainly formulated objectives as regards the roles of the mentor and the participant. The relationship should aim at maintaining the refugee's vocational identity and at establishing contacts with occupationally active persons in the same professional category. The Government instructed NBYA to evaluate the mentoring programme. As was plain from the instruction, the question at stake for the evaluation was to find out the extent to which participation in the mentoring projects had an *effect* on the probability of participants compared to non-participants of having become employed or started out in business. According to the ordinance regarding the mentoring programme, projects that were aimed at women should be particularly supported and encouraged. Therefore, one goal of the evaluation of the programme was to investigate differences between female and male participants regarding the effect on the probability of being employed after having completed their participation in the project.

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<sup>4</sup> Subsidiary protection in accordance with joint EU regulations as well as protection in accordance with national legislation.

## **Previous research on and evaluations of mentoring programmes<sup>5</sup>**

There exist a number of surveys of mentoring programmes of which Underhill (2006) has the most focus on labour market outcomes.<sup>6</sup> Underhill (2006) presents the results of 106 studies of mentorship programmes. At the first glance the results point towards positive impacts of mentoring on participants' career and income. However, most of the surveyed studies have serious methodological drawbacks. For instance, several of them give accounts of self-reported outcomes. Further, many of the studies do not use a control group of treated persons and a comparison group of non-treated persons. Therefore it is questionable if reported positive effects are caused by the studied mentoring programme. Of the 106 studies only 14 use a control group.<sup>7</sup> Of these 14 studies all but one report positive and significant results. Underhill (2006) also reveals that variations in the objectives of the different mentor programmes. The outcomes of mentoring can be subjective or objective. Subjective or qualitative outcomes are, for example, impact on job satisfaction, on experienced stress, on self-esteem, while objective or quantitative outcomes are such as impact on income, on the probability of securing a job or a promotion. Separate analysis of quantitative and qualitative output reveals discrepant findings. As regards qualitative outcomes, evaluations show no positive impacts. This also corresponds to the results presented in Allen et al. (2004). Another distinction made in Underhill (2006) refers to the difference between men and women in the results of mentoring and the difference between programmes aiming at qualitative results and programmes trying to achieve quantitative results.<sup>8</sup> Underhill concludes that males on average have more to gain from participating in mentoring programmes than females and that the

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<sup>5</sup> This section builds on Hammarstedt & Månsson (2011).

<sup>6</sup> See e.g. Merriam, 1983; Jacobi, 1991; DuBois et al., 2002; Allen et al., 2004; Underhill, 2006; Eby et al., 2008.

<sup>7</sup> Baugh et al. 1996; Chao, 1997; Chao et al., 1992; Corzine et al, 1994; Day & Allen, 2004; Fagenson, 1989; Fagenson, 1994; Mobley et al., 1994; Nielson et al., 2001; Ragins & Cotton, 1999; Schwerin & Bourne, 1998; Seibert, 1999; Wallace, 2001 and Yoder, 1992.

<sup>8</sup> For a discussion of the difference between formal and informal mentoring programs, see e.g. Chao et al. (1992).

results in qualitative studies of mentoring seem to be better than those reported in quantitative ones.

The results of Underhill's meta-analysis can be viewed as averages. Therefore it makes sense to be more specific about results presented in some of his studies. Baugh et al. (1996) compare the results between males and females. The result of the evaluation is that participants in the mentoring programme had a more positive experience of work than the participants in the control group. Further, participants' employability was judged to have increased. There were no differences between males and females. Chao (1997) followed the career development for males and females over a five-year period after participating in a mentoring programme. Two of the outcomes were subjective (job satisfaction and social interaction) and one was objective (income). Chao reports positive impacts, regardless of type of outcome definition. The focus in Chao et al. (1992), Ragins and Cotton (1999) and Ragins et al. (2000) is on the programme design. Programmes whose object was to affect subjective outcomes (informal programmes) were compared with programmes that aimed at having an effect on objective ones (formal programmes). All three studies found that formal programmes were more likely to have a positive impact. Further, Ragins and Cotton (1999), in addition to Ragins et al. (2000) point out that, as regards a programme's impact, there was a difference both with respect to the gender of the mentor and to the gender of the participants. Day and Allen (2004) focus on career opportunities after participating in a mentoring programme. The result showed a positive impact on expected career opportunities and that this positive impact was larger for participants who had reported high motivation for their line of work.<sup>9</sup> In Fagenson (1994) the impact on the relationship between participants in mentoring and co-workers and managers was studied. At the start of the programme, the

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<sup>9</sup> Day and Allen (2004) discusses career motivation in three different dimensions; *career resilience*, *career insight* and *career identity*.

relationship was judged by participants, co-workers and managers. When the programme was completed they were asked to assess if the relationship had changed and, if so, to what extent. All three parties reported positive impacts. The programme participants, however, reported larger improvement in relationship than did their co-workers and managers. In a study by Nielson et al. (2001) the life puzzle is the centre of attention. The study reports that participation in the mentoring programme made it easier for participants than for non-participants to combine family and work. Sibert (1999) used a longitudinal approach and followed participants during a one-year period. A result of the study was that participants experienced an increase in their job satisfaction. However, this outcome was small. Wallace (2001) evaluated the impact of mentoring in a programme for female lawyers. Effects were estimated by comparing outcomes for participants with those of similar members of a comparison group. One of the objectives of the mentoring programme was to enhance participants' probability of promotion. Therefore, the author looked into the development of participants' careers after mentoring. He also studied how the outcome was linked to the gender of the mentor. The results revealed that participants in the mentoring programme had both a better income development and a higher probability of promotion than non-participants. Further, participants also had greater job satisfaction. In terms of the gender of the mentor, different impacts were identified. Females who had male mentors had better income development and greater probability of promotion than did participants with female mentors. Conversely, participants with female mentors reported higher job satisfaction and better ability to combine work and family than did participants who had a male mentor. Mobley et al. (1994) also focuses on lawyers. A first result of the study was that that female lawyers were more likely to have a mentor than male lawyers were. Having a mentor increased self-reported job satisfaction for both males and females. As mentioned in the introduction of the study, it is the only one that also brought refugees into focus. Comparing



refugees and natives the study reports no difference between the two groups in terms of the impact of mentoring on job satisfaction. Further, there were no differences that could be attributed to the mentor's immigrant background.

To summarise, the result of our survey indicates that mentoring programmes in general have positive impacts on the possibility to establish a career, on job satisfaction and on the possibility of combining work and family life. The positive impact is slightly higher for males than for females. Further, the results show that informal mentoring programmes are more effective than formal ones. However, many of the studies surveyed have methodological weaknesses. In most of the studies the measured outcome of interest is subjective instead of objective. If objective outcomes had been used to a greater extent in the studies mentioned above, it is quite possible that the picture of effects of mentoring had been different from what is indicated by these studies. In terms of generalization outside of the studied population, the results of the studied programmes have their limitations because many of them were geared to high-level professions such as managers and lawyers. It seems difficult to make conclusions about the effects of mentoring programmes for individual participants who do not belong to these populations. After having examined the studies we believe that there is cause for raising the question as to how the programmes were selected. None of the surveyed studies have used some kind of matching technique to evaluate the effect(s) of mentoring by comparing participants and non-participants. Therefore, we suspect that some of the reported impacts could be selection effects rather than programme effects. One more limitation of the generalization of the results of the studies surveyed is that evaluations of mentoring programmes for certain groups are missing. One such group is refugees.

## **Data and evaluation design**

In contrast to many other observational studies the evaluation plan the Swedish mentoring programme was worked out well before the programme started making data gathering before, during and after the programme possible.<sup>10</sup> The data for the evaluation consisted of three parts: questionnaires to be filled in by programme participants before and at the end of their participation, a process evaluation with focus on activities in projects of the programme and finally a register-based impact evaluation. The mentoring *programme* was composed of numerous *projects* in different places or regions. When the projects were underway, the evaluation group had several meetings with the project managers. The purpose was to inform them about the design of the impact evaluation and about what they had to follow not to make difficult reliable estimations of effects. The evaluation group stressed the importance of seeing that all participants filled in the questionnaires and that project leaders made sure that project participants were registered at an employment office. This work resulted in good response rates for the questionnaire.

Another objective of the process evaluation was to elicit information about the selection process used in the projects to choose participants. It became clear that an observable administrative selection process was used to determine the eligibility of possible candidates for the mentoring programme. However, due to the strict participation criteria's and, in most case, geographical limitation some projects had difficulties recruiting participants who belonged to the target group. The main selection mechanism into project participation was thus regional and project specific targeted groups. In some cases places were filled with other persons outside of the target group. These participants in the mentoring programme are not included in the evaluation.

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<sup>10</sup> Due to political constraints it was not possible to use a randomized impact evaluation design.

Two sources of data are used in the quantitative evaluation. Firstly, as mentioned above, primary data was collected from participants by means of questionnaires before and after their participation in the programme. Since programme participants had to give a personal identity number it was possible to combine the information obtained from the questionnaires with information obtainable from public registers and from the Employment Service's database. For the impact assessment only register data was used since information about non-participants was necessary for the estimation of effects of programme participation. We had access to data from the year before the programme started in 2009 and follow-up data until 1 January 2013, i.e. one year after completing the program.

### *Outcomes*

The meaning of '*getting a job*' is extensively discussed in Månsson and Lundin (2015). The objective for Swedish labour market policy, in general, is that an unemployed person shall leave unemployment for a full time and unsubsidized job on the open labour market. However, individuals in the mentoring project's target group are far from gaining a firm footing on the labour market. Therefore, it may be unrealistic to attain the labour market policy objective for the unemployed refugees for whom the mentoring programme was intended. We have therefore also included three additional outcomes that indicate that programme participant has come closer to the core labour market. The second definition includes atypical employment agreements such as temporary and part-time employment and subsidised employment. It is a known fact that many individuals that have received these kinds of employment changes labour market status several times in a given time period. Therefore, we have constructed two additional outcome definitions independent of numerous spells and differences in duration. These are based on yearly income thresholds and to be considered to have moved closer to the core labour market a person shall have had a yearly

income from work or self-employment. A first income threshold is that a person should have a yearly income from work or self-employment exceeding SEK 100,000 SEK. The second income threshold is that the yearly income from work or self-employment should exceed one price basic amount which 2009 amounted to SEK 42,800.<sup>11</sup> To have reached or crossed one of these thresholds cannot be said to definitely indicate transition to work, but it will give an indication of having obtained a more secure position on the labour market and at least moved closer to the core labour market.

### *Matching method*

Our decision to use covariate matching and match programme participants to non-participants is based on the quite large heterogeneity of projects in the programme. Some projects are limited to females, some to the well-educated, and others to the poorly educated etc. Some projects have an overrepresentation of refugees from certain regions or countries. For this reason, average based matching such as propensity score matching is less likely to provide good matching. For our evaluation we therefore use the Coarsened Exact Matching approach (CEM)<sup>12</sup>. In CEM covariates considered to be of importance for individuals as regards the possibility to be assigned to the programme are temporarily coarsened – observations of covariates are grouped in strata that preserve information. On the coarsened data, each participant is matched to one or more non-participants.

The premise of the CEM-approach used in this study is to make an exact match within a stratum on covariates that are considered important for participation and outcome. Each participant is matched to at least one non-participant which makes the approach comparable to

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<sup>11</sup> The average yearly income in Sweden 2014 was around SEK 376 800.

<sup>12</sup> For applications see e.g. Blackwell et al. 2009; Iacus et al. 2012; Widerstedt and Månsson, 2015.

stratified sampling. The CEM matching approach is non-parametric, making it possible to include other factors in a second stage.

The following characteristics are used for matching. Participant and matched non-participant(s) shall:

- a) come from the same region before immigrating to Sweden
- b) live in the same local labour market
- c) be of the same gender
- d) have the same education,
- e) have the same educational level,
- f) have arrived in Sweden the same year,
- g) have been registered at the employment office the same month and year.

All of the matching variables relate to the individual before programme start and can influence both programme assignment and the outcome of participation in the mentoring programme. Before the programme started, 83,855 non participating individuals fulfilled the requirements for formal eligibility and were included in the matching process. After matching there was a matched non-participant for 151 out of 257 participants (59%).<sup>13</sup> Since quite strict matching conditions were used, it is unavoidable that for some participants no non-participant could be found. The matching quality is good in the sense that after matching, differences in the values of covariates, before the programme started, among the group of participants and the control group of non-participants are negligible. (See Appendix, table A2.)

After matching there are a number of variables whose value may change during project participation, a fact that can influence the outcome. In the impact estimates presented we control for such factors. The first factor was age and we expect that the probability of getting

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<sup>13</sup> See appendix, table A1

a job will increase up to a certain age and thereafter diminish. The second variable is an indicator of whether the person is married/cohabitating or not. Two variables indicate whether or not there are children in the household. The first variable measures the number of children younger than 16 years old and the second variable indicates if the person is single with children younger than 16 years. Having children living at home can have two effects. On the one hand, it may reduce the motivation to take up a full-time job because of childrearing responsibilities. On the other hand, having children may intensify efforts to leave unemployment in order to improve the family's income. When a person participates in a mentoring project she or he may obtain Swedish citizenship. A variable that shows if this is the case is included. Our assumption is that obtaining Swedish citizenship will have a small positive impact on the probability of leaving unemployment. A newly arrived immigrant in Sweden is entitled to take a basic course in the Swedish language. We have information about whether or not a person has completed that course. This variable is also included in the model.

## **Results**

The result section is divided into two parts. The first part presents the results of the impact assessment. We first present the results for the total population and thereafter results after having broken up the analysis with respect to gender. The reason for this second analysis is that we expected quite large differences in the effect of programme participation between male and females. In the second part we investigate within program variation and regress program characteristics on outcomes.

### ***Impact assessment***

In Table 1 the impact estimates for the total population are presented.

Table 1. Impact estimates, all participants belonging to the target group. Standard errors in parentheses.

	<u>Unsubsidised full– time jobs and education</u>	<u>Unsubsidised job and part– time, temporary and subsidised employment</u>	<u>Income above SEK 100,000</u>	<u>Income above SEK 42,800</u>
	Marg.Eff	Marg.Eff	Marg.Eff	Marg.Eff
Programme impact	-0.010 (0.021)	0.032 (0.041)	0.007 (0.046)	0.050 (0.047)
Age	-0.001 (0.001)	<b>-0.003</b> (0.002)	-0.002 (0.002)	<b>-0.005</b> (0.002)
Female	0.016 (0.018)	-0.022 (0.033)	<b>-0.075</b> (0.038)	-0.013 (0.039)
Married/Cohabitant	-0.014 (0.022)	-0.040 (0.042)	-0.030 (0.044)	-0.026 (0.048)
Number of children less than 16 years	-0.008 (0.007)	-0.005 (0.011)	-0.005 (0.015)	-0.010 (0.016)
Single with children less than 16 years	-0.003 (0.026)	-0.034 (0.049)	0.018 (0.072)	-0.047 (0.070)
Obtained Swedish citizenship	0.019 (0.023)	-0.038 (0.035)	<i>0.084</i> (0.052)	<b>0.110</b> (0.051)
Completed course in Swedish	<b>0.085</b> (0.020)	<b>0.125</b> (0.032)	<b>0.180</b> (0.036)	<b>0.184</b> (0.037)
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	0.060	0.030	0.040	0.040

**Bold = significant on 5%-level, *Italic = significant on 10 %-level.***

In the table, figures in bold indicate significance at the 5% level and figures in italic significance at the 10% level. The general finding is that on average we cannot identify any significant differences between participants in the mentoring projects and matched non-participants. It is important to keep in mind that the analysis is performed on matched data which partly explain that most of the variables are insignificant. Since the data is matched sample weights are used in the analysis. However, there are some control variables that have a significant impact on the probability of a successful outcome of programme participation. For example, being female reduces the probability of transferring from unemployment to employment by 7.5 percentage points if the higher income threshold is used in the analysis. A negative effect in this respect holds good for both female participants and non-participants. One variable that stands out is completion of the mandatory course in Swedish. No matter which of the income thresholds is used, there is a large positive effect. People who have passed a course in Swedish have a higher probability of employment. The estimates in this

respect range from a probability in this respect that is 8.5 to 18.4 percentage points higher than for participants who had not completed a course in the Swedish language.

### *Impact assessment for females*

Even if the mentoring programme did not produce any significant average treatment effects on the population of programme participants, there could be differences between males and females. Therefore, separate analyses of males and females are conducted. Table 2 reports the results for females.

Table 2 Impact assessment for females, Standard errors in parentheses.

	<u>Unsubsidised full-time jobs and education</u>	<u>Unsubsidised job and part-time, temporary and subsidised employment</u>	<u>Income above SEK 100,000</u>	<u>Income above SEK 42,800</u>
	Marg.Eff	Marg.Eff	Marg.Eff	Marg.Eff
Programme impact	-0.029 (0.030)	0.024 (0.059)	-0.060 (0.062)	-0.045 (0.065)
Age	0.000 (0.001)	0.001 (0.002)	0.000 (0.002)	-0.004 (0.003)
Married/Cohabitant	<i>0.037</i> (0.023)	0.039 (0.045)	-0.081 (0.057)	<b>-0.150</b> (0.057)
Children less than 16	-0.016 (0.010)	-0.021 (0.017)	-0.012 (0.025)	-0.003 (0.024)
Single with children less than 16	0.023 (0.035)	0.003 (0.054)	-0.006 (0.067)	-0.111 (0.067)
Obtained Swedish citizenship	0.019 (0.041)	0.005 (0.061)	0.019 (0.081)	0.039 (0.082)
Completed course in Swedish	<b>0.099</b> (0.034)	<b>0.129</b> (0.046)	<b>0.170</b> (0.051)	<b>0.194</b> (0.051)
<i>Pseudo R<sup>2</sup></i>	0.060	0.030	0.034	0.043

**Bold = significant on 5%-level, *Italic = significant on 10 %-level.***

Table 2 shows no significant impacts for females participating in the mentoring programme and even some negative signs on the impact estimates. It should be kept in mind that the mentoring project are targeting refugees and the lack of impact can well be some kind of lock-in effects, especially for females. In the participant group there are females from countries where the male is the traditional breadwinner and where females to a great extent have had their previous occupation in the informal sectors, such as home work. Thus, having to report and register to the employment office will in these cases mean that a person moved from



inactivity to activity and formally from outside of the labour force into the same. It can be expected that some females were considerably further away from the core labour market and therefor might need longer treatment within regular employment programmes to be able to take up a job.<sup>14</sup> The results reveal that the contribution of having finalised the mandatory course in Swedish on the probability to end up in any of the outcomes is large, positive and significant. To have finalised the course in Swedish will increase the probability of a successful outcome by 9.9 percentage points at the least and 19.4 percentage points at the most.

### *Impact assessment for males*

Table 3 present a separate analysis for males.

Table 3. Impact assessment for males

	<u>Unsubsidised full-time jobs and education</u>	<u>Unsubsidised job and part-time, temporary and subsidised employment</u>	<u>Income above SEK 100,000</u>	<u>Income above SEK 42,800</u>
	Marg.Eff	Marg.Eff	Marg.Eff	Marg.Eff
Programme impact	0.007 (0.029)	0.036 (0.057)	0.066 (0.067)	<b>0.132</b> (0.068)
Age	-0.001 (0.001)	<b>-0.007</b> (0.003)	-0.004 (0.003)	<b>-0.008</b> (0.003)
Married/Cohabitant	-0.050 (0.034)	-0.084 (0.061)	0.022 (0.062)	0.077 (0.066)
Children less than 16	-0.002 (0.008)	0.006 (0.014)	0.000 (0.020)	-0.013 (0.021)
Obtained Swedish citizenship	0.017 (0.022)	<i>-0.076</i> (0.039)	<b>0.140</b> (0.066)	<b>0.171</b> (0.066)
Completed course in Swedish	<b>0.069</b> (0.021)	<b>0.119</b> (0.044)	<b>0.191</b> (0.049)	<b>0.182</b> (0.051)
<i>Pseudo R<sup>2</sup></i>	0.070	0.060	0.044	0.049

**Bold = significant on 5%-level, *Italic = significant on 10 %-level.***

When the sample is limited to males, we find positive and significant impacts when the lower income definition is used. According to the analysis, male participants in the mentoring programme had 13.2 percentage points higher probability than male non-participants to earn more than one basic amount from work. This cannot, however, be interpreted as that male participants having been firmly established on the labour market, but it is a strong indication

<sup>14</sup> At the moment we do not have access to data to test if this is the case but additional qualitative research is carried out on this matter.

that they have moved closer to it. As regards effects of the control variables, the estimated effect of having obtained Swedish citizenship and of having completed the mandatory course in Swedish is large, positive and significant.

***Which features in the mentoring programme have an effect on the outcome?***

Since we administered a survey we have access to information about the essential ingredients in the projects and the characteristics of the mentor. Further, since there is a positive and significant effect for males on the probability to have an income from work exceeding SEK 42,800 we have performed an analysis of how ingredients in the programme influence the probability for this group. That is, what ingredients in the program affect the outcome, given the knowledge that the program provides significant and positive impacts for this group. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 4.<sup>15</sup>

Table 4. The influence on getting an income in excess of one basic amount of project activities and mentors and mentee’s characteristics. Logit model

	Marginal effect	Standard Error
<i>Mentee</i>		
Age	<b>-0.022</b>	0.009
More than 9 and less than 13 years education (self-reported)	-0.020	0.160
More than 13 years education (self-reported)	<i>0.282</i>	0.171
Married/cohabitant	-0.064	0.157
Children aged less than 16	0.034	0.136
Have moved within Sweden	-0.068	0.148
Completed Swedish course	-0.049	0.135
Obtained Swedish citizenship	<i>0.253</i>	0.153
Total number of years worked (self-reported)	<b>0.034</b>	0.011
<i>The mentoring</i>		
Mentoring in Swedish	0.192	0.203
More than 5 mentoring sessions	-0.086	0.145
<i>The mentor</i>		
Mentor manager or self employed	0.085	0.136
Mentor’s tenure more than 5 years	-0.210	0.136
Female mentor	0.152	0.147
Mentor above 60 years of age	0.176	0.164
Mentor born in Sweden	-0.235	0.204

Pseudo R<sup>2</sup> = 0.20, LL = -66.56. **Bold** indicate significance at 5% level and *italic* 10% level.

<sup>15</sup> Descriptive statistics are presented in Appendix, Table A3.

The analysis is based on the 122 males who entered the mentoring programme. As a whole few variables related to mentors or to activities in the project affect the outcome. There is an estimated negative effect of the mentee's age. That is, the older the mentee, the less likely that she or he has an income from work exceeding one basic amount. As expected, an increase in years of education results in a higher probability of crossing the income threshold. Including work experience from the home country in the analysis reveals that the more work experience the higher the probability to have come closer to the core labour market in Sweden. Before launching the programme there was a discussion of mentoring intensity – how much mentoring is enough? In our analysis, mentoring intensity is considered to be low if there have been five or fewer than five meetings between mentor and mentee and high if there have been more than five meetings. The analysis shows that the mentoring intensity does not have a significant effect. In the review of previous research we mentioned that there were evaluation results which indicated that the mentor's gender was important in the results of participation in the mentoring programme. This is, however, not the case in the Swedish mentoring programme under examination here. We did not find that the mentor's gender affected the outcome for mentees. Finally, one of the objectives of the mentoring programme was to inform the mentee about conditions on the Swedish labour market. It could be expected that a mentor born in Sweden had an advantage in being able to convey such information. Therefore it might be expected that having a Swedish mentor could play a crucial part in the outcome of the mentoring programme. This is, however, not supported by the result of our analysis.

## **Conclusion and concluding remarks**

This study seeks to ascertain if unemployed refugees' participation in mentoring will accelerate the job-seeking process and increase the probability of getting a job or coming

closer to the core labour market. Since most unemployed refugees are far from the labour market, an outcome in the latter sense is an important step towards gaining a foothold on the labour market. The mentoring programme's target group was refugees who had recently arrived in Sweden and other people seeking shelter. If the analysis is performed for the whole population, no significant impacts could be identified. When the analysis is broken up with respect to gender, it reveals no significant impact for females. It is, however, not possible to come to the conclusion that the program do not work for females. We suspect that the lack of impacts could be related to lock-in effects that in a longer run could result in a positive impact. For some females participating in the mentoring program, and therefore register at the employment office, it could be viewed as a transition from inactive to active. The conclusion we arrive on is that the time between finalising the program and reaching one of the used outcomes might be too short. However, males who had participated in the mentoring programme had 13.4 percentage points higher probability than non-participants to have earned an income from work exceeding SEK 42,800. In this first analysis of the mentoring programme's impact, we did not consider any characteristics as regards how the programme was performed; it was a 'black box'.

In a second analysis we opened the box in order to analyse if there were features in the process of performing the mentoring programme that had an influence on its outcome. This analysis was performed only for males, since the impact assessment showed that it was only for them that participating in the programme led to results intended. After having examined the previous studies of mentoring programmes we could conclude that some of the findings did not agree with our results. For example, we did not find any effect of the gender of the mentor; female and male mentors influenced the results for male programme participants in the same way. A question that arose in planning the programme is how many times a mentee should meet with the mentor. Before the programme started, this topic was a large issue. Our

analysis reveals, however, that the intensity of mentoring did not have any impact. Another factor that might influence the outcome of the programme is the national origin of the mentor. The results of our analysis do not indicate a difference in goal attainment depending on whether or not the mentor was born in Sweden.

The conclusion reached from our study is that mentoring seems to have a positive and significant short term impact for males when we defined the outcome as at least having an income from work or self-employment exceeding one basic amount. We argue that this first indication give a promising prospect for mentoring activities as a way of integrating refugees in the labour market. However, the result also point in the direction that for the target group to be fully integrated we need to allow more time. We therefore suggest a further follow-up.

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## Appendix

**Table A1. Number of matched participants and non-participants**

	Matched	Not Matched	Total
Participants	145	112	257
Non-participants	2 437	81 418	83 855
Total	2 582	81 530	

**Table A2. Matching quality**

	Difference
Origin of birth (grouped)	0.00
Local labour market	0.00
Gender	0.00
Education (6 levels)	0.00
Years arrived in Sweden	0.00
Period registered as unemployed (Intervals)*	-0.06

\* -0.06 on period registered as unemployed means that non- participants, were on average, registered less than one week prior to participants.

**Table A3. Males participating in the mentoring programme. N = 122**

Variables	Mean	Std.Dev	Min	Max
<i>Labour market income &gt; SEK 48,800</i>	0.70	0.46		
Age	36.46	10.43	19	63
More than 9 and less than 13 years education (self-reported)	0.30	0.46		
More than 13 years education (self-reported)	0.42	0.50		
Married/cohabitant	0.71	0.45		
Children less than 16	0.46	0.50		
Have moved within Sweden	0.27	0.45		
Completed Swedish course	0.53	0.50		
Obtained Swedish citizenship	0.14	0.35		
Total number of years worked (self-reported)	10.18	8.26	1	46
Mentoring in Swedish	0.58	0.50		
More than 5 mentoring sessions	0.52	0.50		
Mentor manager or self employed	0.60	0.49		
Mentors tenure more than 5 years	0.71	0.45		
Female mentor	0.24	0.43		
Mentor above 60 years of age	0.39	0.49		
Mentor born in Sweden	0.61	0.49		