Social Work Perspective on Third-Country Solutions for Refugees
An exploratory study of two EU Countries' work with Resettlement and Complementary Pathways

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Abstract

This study delves into Sweden and Italy's distinctive approaches to third-country solutions for refugees from a social work perspective. It scrutinizes Sweden's involvement in resettlement via state-directed procedures and Italy's engagement in complementary pathways, primarily through community-driven sponsorship initiatives. Employing a qualitative comparative methodology, the study unearths variations and commonalities within these strategies, underscoring their respective strengths and challenges within the realm of social work. While Sweden's resettlement program has been associated with notable achievements in refugee integration, recent reductions in the refugee quota have prompted concerns. Italy's community sponsorship initiatives exhibit promise, yet their long-term viability hinges on increased governmental backing. Overall, these third-country solutions provide secure and lawful avenues for refugees, necessitating robust collaboration between governmental bodies and civil society within the context of social work. This study enhances our comprehension of these pivotal approaches amid the ongoing global refugee crisis.

Title

Keywords
Third-country solutions, resettlement, complementary pathways, refugee quotas, social work, civil society, community sponsorship
**Sammanfattning**


**Titel**

Socialt arbete-perspektiv på tredjelandslösningar för flyktingar: En utforskande studie av två EU-länders arbete med vidarebosättning och kompletterande vägar

**Nyckelord**

Tredjelandslösningar, vidarebosättning, kompletterande vägar, flyktingkvoter, socialt arbete, civilsamhälle, ideellt flyktingstöd
Foreword

It is with deep gratitude and humility that I take this opportunity to express my profound appreciation for the privilege I had to complete my internship at the non-governmental organization Caritas Italiana. This unique opportunity opened the doors for me to develop a profound interest in the field of third-country solutions for refugees and laid the foundation for this study.

My background as a second-generation refugee, where my parents fled Eritrea in search of a better and safer life for me and my siblings, has forged a personal connection to the subject. I carry their experiences of displacement and the pursuit of a secure future, which has driven my commitment and interest in exploring how societies can create pathways for refugees.

This thesis is the result of a journey that involved not only my academic pursuit but also my personal conviction about the importance of establishing safe and just avenues for refugees to rebuild their lives. I am deeply grateful for the opportunities and support I have received along the way. I extend my heartfelt thanks to Johan Gärde, my supervisor at the university, for his invaluable guidance and support throughout the process. My appreciation also extends to Oliviero Forti, who was my exceptional mentor during my internship at Caritas Italiana. His insightful advice and dedicated mentorship have been crucial in understanding the dynamics of working within a non-governmental organization and its collaboration with other stakeholders.

I would also like to extend a heartfelt thank you to all the respondents who shared their experiences and insights, as well as everyone who has contributed in various ways to make this study possible. This thesis is not just my work; it is the result of a collective effort and a genuine commitment to understanding and improving the lives of those in displacement.

Thank you all.

Rodas Berhane

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1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction

When I asked a former refugee whether he felt thankful for the opportunity he had received to resettle in Europe, he responded:

I feel grateful. Escaping from Eritrea to Ethiopia was the most challenging experience I've ever been through. Having to leave behind my entire life, my family, my country, and then ending up in a place where I had to wait for years, all the while hoping for the chance at a safer and better life with no possibility of returning home, was heart-wrenching. But I am grateful, because, like a few of us, I got that opportunity. However, there are so many others like us, waiting and praying for the help I received, but they never get it. So yes, I am thankful, but what about them?

*Former Eritrean Refugee, now living in Crema, Italy.*

Today, over 100 million people are displaced. Never in history have so many people been forced to flee from war, persecution, and conflicts (UNHCR, 2022). The number of refugees and migrants risking their lives worldwide to escape war and poverty is alarmingly high and expected to continue increasing in the near future. We are facing one of our greatest global crises, where the death toll of refugees attempting perilous journeys to Europe across the Mediterranean is higher than ever (UNHCR, 2023). However, we are also in a dilemma because, despite the ongoing refugee crisis, more and more countries are choosing to close their borders. Refugees repeatedly face barriers and resistance on their journey rather than assistance towards a safer life. What happens when we have more refugees than ever but countries unwilling to receive them? This humanitarian crisis is a potent reminder of the urgent need to help refugees and advocate for their rights.

One of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) three sustainable solutions to address the refugee crisis is resettlement. Resettlement entails the coordinated relocation of refugees from a host country, where they cannot return to their home country or remain, to a third country. Resettlement provides secure and legal pathways to a third country where refugees receive international protection and permanent residency (UNHCR, 2023). Organized initiatives like resettlement are crucial as they reduce the risk of refugees ending up in dangerous situations, facing violence, exploitation, or losing their lives during their journey. In addition to resettlement, UNHCR, in collaboration with civil organizations, has organized complementary pathways in countries like Italy. Complementary pathways also offer safe and legal pathways for individuals needing international protection, providing them with legal residence in a third country. These complementary pathways can include education programs, employment opportunities, family reunification processes, humanitarian initiatives, and sponsorship programs. These pathways complement resettlement efforts and do not replace a country's resettlement programs (Global Compact on Refugees, n.d.).

In 2022, only 12 out of 27 EU member states received refugees through resettlement, with Sweden and Italy being two of them (EUAA, 2023). The work on safe and legal refugee pathways differs
between Sweden and Italy. In Sweden, the government has decided to receive quota refugees through resettlement programs, where the Swedish Migration Agency is responsible for receiving and integrating the newly arrived quota refugees (Swedish Migration Agency, 2022). Italy gets a smaller number of quota refugees compared to other receiving EU countries. However, in cooperation with the state and UNHCR, Italy's civil society is responsible for receiving refugees needing international protection through complementary pathways (Global Compact on Refugees, n.d.).

Working with refugees is a central area within social work worldwide. With my background and experience in this field, studying third-country solutions for refugees in Sweden and Italy is highly meaningful. As a social worker, I can analyze the social work in both countries related to the reception of quota refugees. Through such a study, I can connect to social work on multiple levels and contribute to knowledge development and improvement of practices within social work concerning refugees.

1.2 Problem Definition

The problem addressed in this study stems from the current refugee situation, where UNHCR estimates that over two million refugees will require resettlement in 2023, while the actual number of resettled refugees in 2022 accounted for just under 3.5 percent of this need (UNHCR, 2022). There is a clear gap between the need for resettlement and the actual number of refugees resettled, with one crucial factor being states' decisions to establish resettlement programs and the quotas of refugees they agree to accept.

The European Union's handling of the refugee crisis and its efforts in resettlement have also faced criticism. Despite commitments to resettle thousands of refugees annually, resettlements have been significantly lower than expected. In 2022, EU+ states resettled only 21,000 refugees, corresponding to less than 1.4% of the 1.47 million people needing resettlement in 2022 (EUAA, 2023). Furthermore, there is an unequal distribution of responsibility and burden among EU member states regarding receiving quota refugees. This can create tensions and obstacles to coordinated and equitable refugee crisis management. The table below from the European Union Agency for Asylum (2023) shows the EU+ countries that received quota refugees in 2022 and 2021:
By examining the work of resettlement in Sweden and complementary pathways in Italy, focusing on government and civil society perspectives, this study aims to shed light on these actors' various roles and functions in the process. This may include analyzing specific programs, strategies, and resources provided by each country's government and civil society and investigating how cooperation and coordination occur among these actors.

By identifying and analyzing the different ways Sweden and Italy receive refugees, the study can contribute to a better understanding of the methods and strategies used in resettlement and complementary pathways and the outcomes of these strategies in both countries. The study can also highlight potential challenges and opportunities arising from the involvement of state/authorities and civil society, which can be valuable for improving and developing resettlement and complementary pathways programs and promoting a more coordinated and equitable management of the refugee crisis in Sweden, Italy, and the EU.

1.3 Purpose and Research Questions

This study aims to explore and compare how Sweden and Italy work on social work within their "Third-Country Solutions for Refugees." The study focuses on Sweden's work with resettlement through government-driven processes and Italy's work with complementary pathways through community sponsorship led by civil society. By examining and analyzing these two perspectives, the study aims to highlight differences, similarities, strengths, and weaknesses in the methods, strategies, and resulting outcomes for third-country solutions. By making this comparison, the study can contribute to a better understanding of different methods of receiving refugees and how government and civil society can collaborate to offer safe and legal avenues for refugees to seek protection and asylum. The research questions I have selected for my study are as follows:

- What organizational or administrative differences and similarities exist in the social work of Sweden's resettlement and Italy's complementary pathways?
• How do the different methods, i.e., resettlement in Sweden and complementary pathways in Italy, affect refugees' integration and social inclusion opportunities?

• What challenges and success factors are identified within each method for third-country solutions in Sweden and Italy, and how do these aspects affect the social work processes and the achieved results in meeting refugees' needs for protection and support?

1.4 Relevance to Social Work

The study aims to investigate and analyze challenges and success factors in the social work of resettlement of quota refugees and complementary pathways, focusing on the Swedish and Italian perspectives. By examining the different social work methods and strategies, a deeper understanding can be gained of the efforts and resources required to facilitate the integration and adaptation of refugees in various societal contexts.

A significant motivation for this study is the desire to address a notable knowledge gap in the field. While numerous studies in Sweden and Italy discuss the roles of the state and civil society in social work with refugees, relatively few delve into the specific social work associated with third-country solutions for refugees. This study seeks to fill this void by concentrating on the intricate resettlement processes and complementary pathways.

A central aspect is to highlight the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration in social work concerning the reception of refugees. By examining the cooperation between different professional groups, including social workers, interpreters, healthcare professionals, and educators, success factors and challenges can be identified. The results can improve the coordination and effectiveness of efforts to promote the integration and well-being of refugees.

Another critical dimension is that the study can reveal structural and societal factors affecting quota refugees' resettlement. A comprehensive understanding of how these factors influence social work with refugees can be developed by examining political decisions, legal frameworks, access to housing, the education system, and employment opportunities. This can contribute to a more holistic and systematic understanding of how social work can impact and be influenced by societal structures and policy decisions.

Finally, the study can contribute to knowledge development in social work by identifying best practices and challenges in resettlement of quota refugees and complementary pathways in Sweden and Italy. By disseminating the results and recommendations of the study, policymakers, practitioners, and other researchers may be influenced to develop and improve social work with refugees. In this way, the study can contribute to creating more inclusive and just societies where quota refugees are offered opportunities for sustainable integration and a dignified life.
2. Background

2.1 Definition of Terms

The following definitions relevant to the work are presented below to enhance the understanding of the content of this paper.

According to The UN 1951 Refugee Convention, a *refugee* is someone who (UNHCR, n.d.):

owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of [their] nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail [themself] of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of [their] former habitual residence, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it.

A small percentage of all those fleeing is included in the *refugee quota*, a method of organized collective transfer of refugees or other vulnerable persons from an asylum country to another that has agreed to receive them and offer them a durable solution. This method is also referred to as *resettlement*. The receiving asylum country decides on the number of refugees to be received, often specifying a predetermined number of individuals. A *quota refugee* is a person who arrives in a country through this method, i.e., resettlement, usually via refugee camps (UNHCR, n.d.).

The *United Nations* (UN) was founded in 1945 to promote international cooperation. The UN's refugee agency, the *United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees* (UNHCR), was established in 1950 with the primary task of overseeing the international protection of refugees—especially the approximately one million refugees forced to flee their homes after World War II. UNHCR's mandate and operations have since significantly expanded, including the number of employees. Today, UNHCR is active in more than 135 countries and is tasked with protecting and assisting refugees at the request of governments or the UN itself and assisting voluntary returnees (UNHCR, n.d.).

The *Swedish Migration Agency* (Migrationsverket) is a Swedish government authority responsible for handling asylum cases and immigration to Sweden. The Migration Agency collaborates with UNHCR and is tasked with receiving quota refugees according to the agreed-upon quotas set by the Swedish parliament. They assess and examine the applications from quota refugees to determine if they meet the requirements and conditions for resettlement according to national legislation and international agreements. Not all quota refugees received by Sweden are classified as refugees; those determined to be refugees in Sweden receive a *refugee status declaration*, an internationally recognized status based on the Geneva Convention and the EU's Qualification Directive. However, some quota refugees are classified as beneficiaries of subsidiary protection. An individual is considered to be a *person in need of subsidiary protection* if they have left their country and cannot return due to the risk of death or exposure to corporal punishment, torture, or other inhumane or degrading treatment or punishment. This can also apply to individuals who face severe and personal risk of harm due to an ongoing armed conflict in their home country. Although the threat to a refugee
and a beneficiary of subsidiary protection upon return may have similar consequences, the threat to refugees is related to one of the various refugee grounds. Therefore, there may not necessarily be any difference in the severity of the threat upon return for the two groups, and both require protection. An individual needing subsidiary protection receives an international protection status declaration based on the EU’s Qualification Directive. An individual with such a status declaration is typically granted a residence permit for 13 months (Migrationsverket, 2023).

*Complementary pathways* complement resettlement by providing alternative means for individuals needing protection to access safety and asylum beyond traditional asylum and refugee processes. This may include various methods and programs, such as humanitarian visas, work-based migration, family reunification, educational programs, or other specific initiatives to facilitate and legitimize people’s journeys and reception. In Italy, civil society through various Christian Civil Society Organizations is responsible for driving and implementing these complementary pathways through *community sponsorship*. By collaborating with authorities and other actors, civil society significantly offers alternative avenues and opportunities for people needing protection (Global Compact on Refugees, n.d.).

*Integration* in the context of refugees refers to the adaptation process through which refugees forced to flee their countries of origin due to conflict or persecution strive to become part of the host society in their new country. The goal is facilitating their participation and inclusion at social, cultural, and economic levels. Integration involves various measures such as language learning, vocational training, engagement in the labor market, access to healthcare and education, and the promotion of mutual understanding between different community groups. Successful refugee integration benefits both the individual and the society by fostering diversity, promoting social cohesion, and contributing economically. It is a complex social process that requires cooperation between authorities, civil society, and the broader community (Montesino & Righard, 2015).

### 2.2 Background

Sweden and Italy are two countries that have played significant roles in the EU’s refugee policy. Both countries have actively participated in the debate and implemented measures to manage the increasing flow of refugees to Europe.

Sweden has long been known for its generous refugee policy and has been one of the countries receiving the most asylum seekers per capita within the EU (EUAA, 2022). The country has been committed to offering protection and assistance to refugees fleeing war, persecution, and other dire situations. Through the quota refugee system, Sweden has actively contributed to resettling refugees since the 1950s and is thus one of the oldest nations practicing this (Migrationsverket, 2022). According to UNHCR, the UN’s refugee agency, Sweden is one of 16 countries that receive a specified number of refugees through resettlement each year. Sweden’s resettlement program began as part of efforts to address the refugee situation in Europe after World War II. Each year, the Swedish
government and parliament allocate resources to the Migration Agency to enable the reception of a specified number of quota refugees in the country. For an extended period, Sweden received around 1,900 quota refugees per year. In October 2016, a decision was made to increase the reception of quota refugees to 5,000 people per year, which has been in effect since 2018. The rationale behind the increased quota of refugee reception in Sweden was the rising number of refugees worldwide urgently needing protection. However, this changed with the Tidö Agreement in 2022, which significantly reduced the number of quota refugees Sweden accepts each year. After the agreement, the number was drastically reduced to only 900 people yearly (Migrationsverket, 2022). The Tidö Agreement was between the government and several opposition parties to reduce the number of asylum seekers and quota refugees received in Sweden.

On the other hand, Italy has faced significant challenges due to its geographical location in the Mediterranean, making it a primary entry point for many migrants and refugees attempting to reach Europe. Italy has managed the extensive influx of people by establishing reception centers and conducting asylum processes to determine refugee status. At the same time, Italy has collaborated with other EU countries and international organizations to share the burden and promote a more unified refugee policy within the EU (European Commission, n.d.). Regarding resettlement, Italy's government has only sometimes accepted quota refugees. In the years when Italy has decided to receive quota refugees through resettlement, the numbers have been limited. Beyond resettlement, civil society, particularly Christian organizations, has taken on the responsibility and organized complementary pathways for individuals needing international protection through community sponsorship (Global Compact on Refugees, n.d.). Italy's work with community sponsorship is inspired by and shares similarities with the Canadian model for managing migration and asylum, also known as the Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program (UNHCR, 2021). The Canadian model for complementary pathways has gained international recognition and proven successful. It allows private actors, including civil society, organizations, and individual citizens, to receive, sponsor, and support refugees during their arrival and adaptation to the country. Sponsors can be non-profit organizations, churches, families, or individual persons. By implementing the Canadian model for complementary pathways, Italy aims to involve and leverage the broader community to manage refugees' reception and integration comprehensively. Engaging civil society and private sponsors enhances the country’s capacity to receive and support refugees more sustainably (UNHCR, 2021).
The first table displays the number of quota refugees resettled by each country between 2003 and 2022, while the second table shows the number of asylum seekers in each country from 2003 to 2022 (UNHCR, 2023).

Both countries have grappled with challenges and limitations in managing the influx of refugees. Sweden previously received many quota refugees, but this number significantly decreased after introducing the Tidö Agreement in 2022. On the other hand, Italy has faced pressures due to the substantial influx of migrants and the strain it has placed on reception and asylum systems. In the EU’s refugee policy, Sweden and Italy have actively advocated for common solutions to address the refugee crisis. They have participated in discussions and negotiations to evenly distribute the burden among member states and promote a more coordinated and solidarity-based approach to refugee management within the EU. However, these efforts have continued to be a source of debate and challenges within the union, as member states have differing views and difficulties reaching consensus on receiving and sharing responsibility for refugees.

The EU has encountered numerous difficulties in managing the refugee crisis recently. Several of the measures implemented by the EU have proven inadequate and ineffective in many ways (Servent, 2020). The 2013 Dublin Regulation, which currently governs the EU’s asylum system, has created an unequal distribution of responsibility among member states, with countries closest to refugees’ countries of origin or transit countries often bearing a disproportionate share of the burden. The EU-
Turkey Agreement 2016 aimed to halt the flow of refugees to Europe by having Turkey take back refugees who had reached Greece. The agreement has been criticized for violating international rights and leaving refugees and migrants in dangerous situations in Turkey. In addition, many EU member states have taken unilateral measures to limit the number of refugees and migrants entering their countries, such as building walls and closing borders. This has created an unequal distribution of responsibility and burden among member states and contributed to many refugees and migrants being stuck in overcrowded camps in transit countries (Servent, 2020).

The refugee crisis has evolved into a complex and polarized conflict marked by different discourses and agendas. This polarization has created a challenging dynamic where extremist parties and populist movements are gaining ground. The public debate on refugee issues has become an arena where various political forces express their views and are driven by divergent interests. Beyond the political and practical aspects, the refugee crisis is a deeply rooted ethical issue. It concerns the protection of people's fundamental rights and dignity. Those in the refugee flow are individuals fleeing from war, persecution, and danger. Finding a solution that respects their right to seek protection and build a better life is a moral obligation that societies and nations cannot ignore.

2.3 Previous Research

This study is grounded in an extensive examination of available scientific research, primarily focusing on third-country solutions such as resettlement and complementary pathways.

The research study *Actions speak louder than claims: humanitarian corridors, civil society and asylum policies* by Ambrosini and Schnyder von Wartensee (2020) has been incorporated into prior research for specific, well-founded reasons. One compelling aspect of its relevance lies in its thematic alignment with the ongoing investigation of the impact and success of complementary pathways for refugees. This study offers a solid foundation, providing a detailed examination of Italy's complementary pathway, known as 'Humanitarian corridors,' and emphasizing the integral role played by civil society. The study's exploration of the practical implications of humanitarian corridors and their influence on asylum policies closely mirrors the research interests. Examining how these pathways function in real-world settings and their consequences for refugee lives contributes valuable insights to this work. Furthermore, the study gains even more relevance due to the opportunity to interview the author, Ilaria Schnyder von Wartensee. Her firsthand experiences, mainly her interviews with numerous refugees involved in Italy's complementary pathways program, provide a unique and insightful perspective that complements the research objectives.

I have included Mehek Muftee's (2017) sociological research titled *Resettlement, Sweden Program, and the Notion of the 'Passive Refugee'* in my prior research on third-country solutions. Muftee's research has been particularly relevant to my study in social work as it investigates resettlement and its connection to Sweden's refugee program. Through her work, I have explored how preconceived notions about refugees can impact the design of such solutions within the social work
framework. The reason for integrating Muftee's research is to gain deeper insights into the factors that can influence the success or shortcomings of third-country solutions, especially concerning the concept of "resettlement" and its relationship with Sweden's refugee program.

I have also incorporated the research study *Whose Pathways are They? The Top-Down/Bottom-Up Conundrum of Complementary Pathways for Refugees* by Joanne van Selm (2023) into my prior research. This study delves into a critical aspect of developing complementary pathways that warrant thorough examination — whether these pathways are best characterized as top-down or bottom-up. The study intricately navigates the roles of diverse actors in practically establishing these pathways, including communities, national authorities, the federal protection regime, and refugees. It probes how these pathways can be effectively integrated into an overarching refugee protection framework while maintaining equilibrium among the expectations and contributions of these various stakeholders. This research poses a fundamental question: Does the bottom-up dimension of complementary pathways enhance their prospects of success? Can governments or international organizations initiate or encourage community involvement 'from above,' or must it originate organically 'from below'? Moreover, given that complementary pathways primarily exist for the benefit of refugees, the study explores the extent to which refugees are actively included in this process. This study's focus on the dynamics between different actors, including civil society and government entities, and delineating their respective responsibilities resonates profoundly with my research interests. Understanding the intricate balance between top-down and bottom-up approaches in establishing complementary pathways is crucial to assessing their efficacy and potential for creating safer and more accessible avenues for refugee protection. As such, the insights from this study significantly contribute to the contextual backdrop of my research, enriching its depth and relevance within the broader academic discourse on refugee resettlement and protection.

I have also chosen to include Blomqvist Mickelsson's doctoral thesis, "Nordic Sports Social Work in the Context of Refugee Reception" (2023), as prior research in my paper. This thesis explores how the sports movement in the Nordic countries, especially in Sweden, has increasingly played a prominent role in social work with refugees, particularly in the context of asylum reception. The thesis discusses the role of civil society within the welfare sector, particularly concerning refugees, emphasizing how civil society organizations have become increasingly significant as welfare providers and how their role has evolved. The thesis also highlights how civil society organizations, especially in refugee reception, can function as rapid and humanitarian "emergency responders" compared to the public sector, sometimes perceived as more bureaucratic and impersonal. Although some organizations maintain their ideological roots, many have adapted to market logic and become more professional. The thesis argues that civil society organizations can play a vital role in social work, especially concerning refugees. Their speed, humanity, and ability to offer services and support in various ways can complement the public sector. At the same time, it's essential to understand that they are not isolated from broader trends, and their role should not be idealized. This research benefits
my study because it sheds light on central aspects of civil society's role and its work with refugees. It complements and strengthens my research focus, and its discussion of civil society's role as a complementary force to the public sector is especially relevant to my analysis of social work with refugees through third-country solutions.

In my study on safe and legal pathways for refugees, I utilize *The Resettlement Handbook* by UNHCR (2023) as a crucial reference for prior research. This UNHCR handbook is a well-respected source containing comprehensive information and guidelines for refugee resettlement. It provides detailed information on various aspects of resettlement programs, including selection criteria, handling refugees' needs and vulnerabilities, integration processes, and collaboration with multiple actors and authorities. It also offers guidance on assessing refugees' protection needs and identifying the most vulnerable individuals and families needing resettlement. By using "The Resettlement Handbook" in my study, I can benefit from UNHCR's expertise and experience in this field. The handbook serves as a foundation for analyzing and evaluating the effectiveness and implementation of resettlement programs. By referencing the handbook, I can investigate and discuss various aspects of safe and legal pathways for refugees in my research. It is important to note that "The Resettlement Handbook" is continuously updated to reflect new needs and best practices in resettlement. Using this source, I can ensure that my research is based on current and authoritative knowledge of the safe and legal pathways for refugees.

Another significant source is *Third Country Solutions for Refugees: Roadmap 2030*, a strategy within the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) framework, an international agreement to improve the global response to refugee needs. The strategy focuses on providing sustainable and long-term refugee solutions by promoting safe and stable opportunities in third countries. Using Third Country Solutions for Refugees: Roadmap 2030 as prior research in my study, I can investigate and analyze the specific measures and principles proposed within the strategy. It gives me a broader context and understanding of global efforts to address the refugee issue. This source also strengthens the validity and reliability of my research by connecting it to an established and authoritative framework within the international community. It allows me to discuss and analyze the overarching goals and principles advocated within the GCR, contributing to the discussion on safe and legal pathways for refugees.

*Refugee Resettlement and Complementary Pathways: Opportunities for Growth* (2021) is a report from UNHCR focusing on resettlement and complementary pathways. The report analyzes opportunities for growth and development in these areas and the importance of increasing efforts to provide safe and sustainable solutions for refugees. Italy's work with complementary pathways is also highlighted in the report. I use this source as prior research to better understand resettlement and complementary pathways offered to refugees. By referring to this report, I can explore the recommendations and guidelines presented by UNHCR to improve resettlement and increase the use of complementary pathways.
2.4 Relevant Legal Framework

In the Aliens Act, several important sections are relevant to resettlement in Sweden. The assessment of asylum cases for quota refugees applies the same criteria as in other refugee cases. This means that even if UNHCR considers a person needing protection, the Swedish Migration Agency may conclude that the person does not meet these criteria. National practice takes precedence, and the Swedish Migration Agency must make assessments and decisions based on Swedish legislation. However, following a decision in the parliament, the Swedish government signed the 1951 UN Refugee Convention, also known as the Geneva Convention. This means that the convention's practices also apply to Swedish legislation. The Refugee Convention still plays a crucial role in protecting refugees by promoting and offering international solutions for people in flight. It fosters cooperation between states, UNHCR, and other international organizations and safeguards human rights. According to the Refugee Convention and the Aliens Act, the refugee definition is the same (SFS 2005:716). According to both, a person is considered a refugee if they have a well-founded fear of persecution based on race, nationality, religion, political opinion, gender, sexual orientation, or membership in a particular social group.
3. Methodology

3.1 Pre-Understanding

During my previous social science education semester, I completed my internship in Italy with Caritas Italiana (https://www.caritas.it/). Caritas is an international Catholic aid organization dedicated to combating poverty and promoting social justice. Their work extends worldwide and aims to support vulnerable and marginalized communities through various humanitarian and development initiatives. Caritas focuses on areas such as health, education, disaster relief, migration, and integration. Caritas Italiana is a civil organization that, among other activities, leads various complementary pathways programs to complement resettlement. During my internship, my main tasks were investigating and learning more about how these complementary pathways programs operate. I had the opportunity to be involved in the programs from their inception and participate in information meetings with refugees before they arrived in Italy. I also received refugees at the airport and visited them in their municipalities and new accommodations. Additionally, I had the opportunity to interview stakeholders and refugees to gain a deeper understanding of their experiences and perspectives.

I also have connections with Caritas Sweden (https://www.caritas.se/), where I have been involved in volunteer work with refugees and have also been responsible for coordinating other volunteers. This connection has given me insight into the practical aspects of working with refugees and contributed to my interest in studying social work at a deeper level. By choosing Caritas as a central actor in my study in Italy and Sweden, I can explore and analyze the different aspects of their work and their collaboration with other actors in resettlement and complementary pathways. This preunderstanding will be valuable in my study as I examine the resettlement work in Sweden and the work with complementary pathways in Italy. By integrating my former experience and understanding into the study, I can contribute to a more nuanced and in-depth analysis of the different strategies and practices used in both countries.

Another essential part of my pre-understanding is my connection to refugeehood and migration. I am the daughter of two former refugees from Eritrea and have grown up with stories of their experiences and challenges as refugees. By hearing their stories and life histories, I have gained a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities refugees face, both during the flight and in the receiving countries. This experience has also taught me how refugees are received and integrated into Swedish society. Having close relatives who are still refugees or have experiences of being refugees has increased my awareness of the challenges and the needs refugees may have when they arrive in a new country. This understanding will influence my research and analysis in third-country solutions studies in Sweden and Italy. It provides me with increased sensitivity and empathy for the perspectives and needs of refugees. It will also contribute to a more nuanced and holistic understanding of the social and psychological aspects of being a refugee and how these can affect integration and adaptation to the new society.
3.2 Method

This study aims to examine and analyze the Swedish and Italian work on resettlement and complementary pathways. To achieve this, I have chosen to conduct qualitative research. Qualitative methodology focuses on delving deeply into the reality I want to investigate rather than broadening the scope by studying many units (Starrin, 1994). My study is of a comparative nature and aims to examine the similarities and differences between Swedish resettlement work and Italian work on complementary pathways. According to Denk (2002), a comparative study can be used to describe how the situation looks in different countries and explain why it looks the way it does. My comparative study constitutes a case study in which I examine several organizations and actors at different levels. I have prioritized the opportunity for explanation over generalization, as it can be challenging to draw far-reaching conclusions based solely on one organization in each country.

3.2.1 Qualitative Interviewing

To capture differences and similarities in the work on resettlement and complementary pathways, I use qualitative interviews with similar questions directed at organizations and actors in both countries. Most of my material consists of interviews with social workers and their supervisors. Primary data thus constitute the main source in my study, but I also use secondary data such as statistics, scientific articles, and books. I see advantages in combining different data collection methods, including vignettes and interviews. I have been inspired by Robson's (2002) "mixed-method designs," which means that you can use different methods whose results can be presented in words and numbers.

In my work, I have conducted extensive data collection in Italy and Sweden, with 19 qualitative interviews, to gain a deeper understanding of the implementation and effects of third-country solutions in refugee management. During my internship in Italy, I had more time for data collection, resulting in 15 qualitative interviews conducted at three different levels.

At level 1, I interacted with six respondents from organizations responsible for leading the complementary pathways. These included two respondents from UNHCR Italy, one respondent from the Catholic civil organization Caritas Italiana, one respondent from the headquarters of the Federation of the Evangelical Churches in Italy (FCEI), one respondent from the evangelical church Diaconia Valdese, and one respondent from the Catholic civil organization Community of Sant' Edigio.

At level 2, I conducted interviews with four respondents who were social workers and caseworkers at different dioceses within Caritas Italiana. These individuals had direct responsibility for various refugees within their dioceses. Additionally, I had an interview with a caseworker/social worker from FCEI.

At level 3, I interacted with four respondents from different dioceses within Caritas Italiana who were quota refugees, and all spoke Tigrinya. These respondents all had an Eritrean background except...
one, who fled from Ethiopia's "Tigray" region due to ongoing conflicts and wars. One respondent from "Caritas Assisi" had also come to Italy through Humanitarian Corridors, along with her daughter, who had a rare medical condition requiring medical assistance for survival. Finally, I interacted with two respondents from "Caritas Palermo" who had come to Italy through university corridors and were thus able to apply for temporary residence permits to pursue master's studies in Italy.

Through these extensive interviews at various levels of actors in refugee management, I have obtained a versatile and in-depth insight into the practical and human aspects of complementary pathways in Italy. This has been crucial for analyzing and reflecting on the challenges, successes, and potential areas for improvement in these programs.

Unfortunately, I did not have the same extensive time available in Sweden as in Italy. Nevertheless, I collected data from four respondents who are crucial in refugee management and third-country solutions. The insights of these respondents have been invaluable for my research and analysis. I had the privilege of interviewing a respondent from UNHCR's representation for the Nordic and Baltic countries. This respondent is actively involved in the work on third-country solutions, especially in Sweden. Another respondent represented the Swedish Migration Agency and is responsible for the selection process and reception of quota refugees arriving in Sweden. I also interviewed a representative from the civil organization Caritas Sweden, which focuses on supporting the integration of refugees, including quota refugees. The fourth respondent was a social worker/caseworker in a municipality working with quota refugees and their integration process.

Although the number of respondents in Sweden was fewer than in Italy, I have supplemented this deficiency by collecting information from various sources such as literature, materials, and reports. Additionally, my experience and work with refugees in Sweden have given me a deeper understanding of the Swedish conditions and the need for third-country solutions. This has allowed me to answer my research questions holistically despite the limited number of respondents and the more compressed timeframe.

### 3.3 Limitations and Selection

In this study, I have made certain limitations to focus on resettlement and complementary pathways, excluding other forms of refugee transfers. This means I limit myself to investigating only the specific phenomenon of resettlement in Sweden and complementary pathways in Italy and exclude other related processes, programs, or countries.

Another limitation of my study is that I have chosen to interview only Eritrean refugees as a focus group. One crucial reason for interviewing only Eritrean refugees is my knowledge of Tigrinya, a common native language among Eritrean refugees. Communicating in their mother tongue creates an immediate sense of trust and understanding, facilitating the interview process and opening for more in-depth discussions about their experiences and challenges. Additionally, I chose to focus on Eritrean
refugees, considering the vulnerability of this group. According to UNHCR (2023), over 500,000 Eritrean refugees left their home country in 2022. This corresponds to more than an eighth of the country's current population. Eritrea has long been known for its dictatorship and systematic human rights violations. Many Eritreans have been forced to flee their homeland in hopes of finding safety and a better future. By focusing on this specific group, I can highlight their challenges and understand the unique aspects of their situation. My connection to the issues and experience with Eritrean refugees have also been motivating solid factors. With parents and relatives who have fled Eritrea, I have seen and been a part of the difficulties and challenges they face. I am aware of the country's ongoing dictatorship and human rights violations. This connection and understanding of their situation have deepened my interest and commitment to investigating their experiences related to third-country solutions.

These limitations help me define and focus my study area and create a more specific and relevant analysis of third-country solutions and their effects on Eritrean refugees. Given my family background and previous work with Eritrean refugees, I am aware of my personal interest and closeness to this issue. It is an essential issue for me, both personally and professionally. Therefore, I have been cautious to be aware of and manage any potential influence of this interest on my data collection and results. I have been objective and strictly follow my research methodology to minimize the risk of bias. I have also had open and honest discussions with my respondents about my background and interest in the topic to create transparency and reduce the risk of influencing their responses. It is essential to note that these limitations include other relevant aspects of refugee reception and integration. Instead, they examine and understand a specific part of the problem area.

3.4 Analyze Method

In my work, I have used a hermeneutic approach. According to Kvale & and Brinkmann (2009), hermeneutics can be defined as interpreting and understanding the meaning of a text. This study focuses on analyzing and understanding the meaning of the collected material using specific questions directed at the text. Hermeneutic interpretation aims to achieve a valid and shared understanding of the text's meaning (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).

After compiling the responses from my investigation, I have sorted the collected material into categories that I consider central themes in the study. I have then analyzed the material based on these themes. Gillham (2008) emphasizes that classes are not created based on previous frameworks but on the researcher's judgment of what is relevant. In my analysis, I have identified the following themes that emerge in the text:

- Selection process and preparations before arrival
- The country's reception of refugees: A deep dive into the integration process
• Government authorities vs. Civil society: A deeper analysis of roles in Sweden and Italy
• Success factors and challenges

3.5 Material and Source Critique
In the thesis, I have aimed to use reliable sources to the greatest extent possible. These sources closely relate to European decision centers and the refugee issue, such as UNHCR (the UN's refugee agency) and the European Union. I have also used academic course literature relevant to the method to prepare the work and gather materials and sources of information. This has contributed to giving the thesis a higher degree of robustness.

In selecting previous studies, I have included those conducted by specialized institutions, such as the official websites of the UN and EU. These sources give the research an academic and scientific character. Additionally, I have used primary sources through interviews in my research to ensure reliability and credibility.

It is important to emphasize that the sources used are mainly credible and have been synchronized. By referencing the sources, I have read, I contribute to increasing the credibility of the research. It is of the utmost importance that the sources used are reliable and that they are consistent with each other to ensure coherent and well-founded research.

3.6 Ethical Considerations
I have followed strict ethical considerations and guidelines in my study, especially relevant when working with a vulnerable group like refugees since it can introduce unique ethical challenges. These challenges stem from the vulnerable position of refugees and the potential for their involvement in research to be ethically complex. While adhering to strict ethical considerations and guidelines, it is essential to recognize the potential for ethical dilemmas.

One notable ethical concern is the concept of informed consent. Given refugees' circumstances, obtaining informed and voluntary consent can be challenging. Many refugees have experienced traumatic events and displacement and may not fully comprehend the implications of participating in research. Therefore, additional care and attention are required to ensure that participants genuinely understand the research's purpose and their role in it. Moreover, the information requirement becomes even more critical in this context. Communicating the study's objectives, the voluntary nature of participation, and the assurance of their ability to withdraw at any point must be done with the utmost sensitivity and clarity. Language barriers and the potential for mistrust of authorities can further complicate these aspects of informed consent.

Furthermore, the use requirement demands particular attention. The collected data should be used exclusively for research purposes, and participants must be assured that their information will be handled with discretion and care, especially given the sensitive nature of their experiences. Lastly, the
confidentiality requirement takes on heightened importance. Protecting the privacy of informants becomes paramount. The potential risks of disclosing sensitive information about their experiences, especially in small and close-knit refugee communities, must be considered. Pseudonyms and linguistic adjustments, as mentioned earlier, are just some of the measures taken to uphold this requirement.

These guidelines are designed to ensure that the rights and well-being of all participants are at the forefront and that the study is conducted ethically. The requirement for informed consent is one of these requirements, where interviewees must provide informed consent to participate in the study. Another requirement is the information requirement, which means that I have informed participants about the purpose of the study, their role, and the conditions for their participation. Participants have also been told that their participation is voluntary and that they can withdraw anytime. Additional requirements include the use requirement, which means that the collected data is used only for research purposes and that informants have been informed of this. The confidentiality requirement is the last requirement, which means that all information and personal data are treated in a way that protects the informants' privacy and prevents unauthorized access to this information (SFS 2003:460, Swedish Research Council's ethical guidelines, 2002). To protect the informants' privacy, pseudonyms have been used instead of their real names in the continued presentation of the material. In direct quotations, some linguistic adjustments have been made to improve readability and to remove repetitions or stammering on individual words. However, these adjustments have been minor in scope and have not affected the central accuracy and consistency of the material.
4. Theory
This chapter presents the analytical tools that will be used in the study. Two theoretical perspectives have been chosen, namely empowerment and advocacy, as well as humanistic practice, existentialism, and spirituality within social work. These theoretical perspectives have been explored and discussed using Malcolm Payne's book "Modern Social Work Theory" (2020). The section concludes with a summary of the theoretical perspectives and their relevance to the research question.

4.1 Empowerment and Advocacy
In Malcolm Payne's book "Modern Social Work Theory" (2020), theories of empowerment and advocacy are discussed as crucial pillars within social work. Here, we delve further into these two theories and their significance.

**Empowerment** is a theory and practice that focuses on strengthening individuals and giving them increased control over their lives and decisions. In social work, empowerment promotes self-determination and self-empowerment among individuals and groups who may be marginalized or have limited access to resources and opportunities. Through empowerment, social workers aim to help clients identify their strengths, develop their skills, and boost their self-confidence. It also involves providing knowledge and information so people can make informed decisions affecting their lives. The empowerment theory emphasizes recognizing clients' expertise and experiences and working with them to promote change and increased independence. By promoting empowerment, social workers can create more equitable and just societies where people can control their lives (Payne, 2020).

In the book "Macro Social Work Practice: Advocacy in Action" (Tice et al., 2019), the authors explain that **advocacy** is a theory and practice focused on acting on behalf of and representing people with limited power and rights. In social work, advocacy involves advocating for social justice, equality, and human rights. Social workers engaged in advocacy work to identify and address structural injustices and inequalities in society. This may involve advocating for clients' voices and interests individually and collectively, working for political change, and influencing societal structures and decision-making processes. By advocating for marginalized and vulnerable groups, social workers can raise awareness of societal issues and fight for improved resources and services for these groups. Advocacy aims to bring about change and promote social justice at a systemic level (Payne, 2020).

In summary, empowerment and advocacy are two essential theories within social work that aim to empower individuals and groups and fight for social justice and equality. Empowerment promotes self-determination, self-empowerment, and participation among clients by identifying and developing their strengths and skills. Advocacy focuses on representing those with limited power and rights by working toward structural changes and advocating for justice and equality at the societal level. By using these theories, social workers can contribute to creating more inclusive and just societies where
people can influence their own lives and where structural injustices and inequalities are addressed.

4.2 Humanistic Practice, Existentialism and Spirituality

In addition to empowerment and advocacy, Payne explores the theoretical perspectives of humanistic practice, existentialism, and spirituality within social work in his book.

*Humanistic practice* emphasizes viewing individuals as a whole and focusing on their unique experiences and potential. It involves creating a therapeutic relationship based on empathy, authenticity, and acceptance. Social workers who apply humanistic practice strive to promote clients' independence, personal growth, and self-actualization. It emphasizes respecting clients' perspectives and choices involving them in decision-making about their own lives. The humanistic practice also underscores the importance of working with client's strengths and promoting their resilience and self-esteem (Payne, 2020).

*Existentialism* delves into more profound questions and challenges of human existence, such as the meaning of life, freedom, responsibility, and the experience of solitude and mortality. In social work, an existentialist understanding can help comprehend and address clients' existential needs and crises. It involves supporting clients in their search for meaning and helping them navigate existential challenges. Social workers can offer a space for reflection and exploration of existential questions, assisting clients in finding meaning and experiencing a sense of coherence in their lives (Payne, 2020).

According to Crisp (2017), in "The Routledge Handbook of Religion, Spirituality, and Social Work," significant issues related to religion and spirituality in social work are discussed. In social work, *spirituality* can be seen as a dimension that goes beyond belief and refers to people's search for meaning and a deeper understanding of themselves and the world. Spirituality involves exploring existential and transcendent questions and can be related to personal development, moral values, a sense of belonging, and a connection to the sacred. Working with spirituality in social work requires sensitivity and cultural competence to meet clients' unique needs and preferences. It involves creating an open, non-judgmental atmosphere where clients can share their thoughts, values, and beliefs without feeling stigmatized or ignored. Spirituality can manifest in various ways for different people, and social workers must be aware of and respect the diversity of spiritual expressions. It may involve meditation, prayer, rituals, reflection, community, or other ways of seeking meaning and spiritual fulfillment. By integrating spirituality into social work without imposing any specific faith or beliefs, social workers can provide holistic and person-centered care. Recognizing and supporting the spiritual dimension can contribute to clients' well-being and ability to cope with challenges and find meaning and hope in their lives (Payne, 2020).

In summary, the section on humanistic practice, existentialism, and spirituality in social work underscores the importance of viewing individuals, addressing their existential needs, and recognizing and supporting their spiritual dimension. Using these theoretical perspectives, social workers can
create a therapeutic relationship based on empathy and authenticity, support clients in their search for meaning, and help them navigate existential challenges. It is also essential to be aware of and respect clients' unique spiritual needs and expressions to promote their well-being and personal development.

4.3 Summary

In my study on resettlement and complementary pathways to resettlement, I have chosen to use two theoretical perspectives: empowerment and advocacy, as well as humanistic practice, existentialism, and spirituality within social work. Below is a summary of why I have selected these theories and perspectives for my study.

I have chosen to include empowerment and advocacy as theoretical perspectives because they are central to social work and related to my topic of resettlement. Using the empowerment theory, I can focus on empowering and giving power to individuals and groups undergoing resettlement. It is about allowing them to control their lives and decisions. Advocacy is essential because it involves fighting for rights and justice for those who may be marginalized and lack power. I can highlight how empowerment and advocacy can influence resettlement and promote individual participation and independence by analyzing and using these theoretical perspectives.

I have also included humanistic practice, existentialism, and spirituality perspectives because they complement and enrich the understanding of resettlement. Using the humanistic approach, I emphasize the importance of seeing each individual as a unique and whole with their own needs and potential. Existentialism provides me with a framework to explore individuals' resettlement experiences, including existential questions and challenges that may arise during the process. Spirituality is also important because it can be a valuable resource for people undergoing resettlement and can contribute to their mental and emotional well-being. Furthermore, the leading organizations in Italy's complementary pathways for resettlement are faith-based.

I can better understand resettlement and its complexity by combining these theoretical perspectives. Empowerment and advocacy allow me to analyze power dynamics and structural injustices within resettlement, while humanistic practice, existentialism, and spirituality help me understand the individual's inner experience and the significance of existential and spiritual dimensions in the process. I can contribute to a more holistic and multifaceted analysis of resettlement and its social work practices using these theoretical frameworks.
5. Results

The extensive data collected through my study will be presented in the following sections. Through carefully conducted interviews with 19 respondents, meticulously divided into four distinct sections, I will systematically explore and deeply analyze various aspects of third-country solutions. These aspects are represented by four clearly defined sections in my results. Among these 19 respondents, 10 are representatives from multiple organizations acting as prominent actors in Sweden and Italy. These organizations play a central role in implementing and designing third-country solutions. Furthermore, the sample group includes five experienced social workers/case managers working directly with refugees in Sweden and Italy. Their perspectives and insights provide an in-depth understanding of challenges and success factors on a more operational level. Finally, four respondents are refugees, directly affected by these methodologies, and able to share their experiences and reflections. The four sections in my results are:

Sections 5.1 Selection Process and Pre-arrival Preparations and 5.3 Government Authorities vs Civil Society: A Deeper Analysis of Roles in Sweden and Italy focus on addressing my first research question: "What organizational or administrative differences and similarities exist in the social work of Sweden's resettlement and Italy's complementary pathways?"

Sections 5.2 Host Country Reception of Refugees: A Deep Dive into the Integration Process (and partially 5.3 Government Authorities vs Civil Society) aim to answer my second research question: "How do different methods, namely resettlement in Sweden and complementary pathways in Italy, affect refugees' opportunities for integration and social inclusion?"

Section 5.4 Success Factors and Challenges addresses my third research question: "What challenges and success factors are identified within the respective methods of third-country solutions in Sweden and Italy, and how do these aspects affect the social work processes and the achieved outcomes in meeting refugees' needs for protection and support?"

5.1 Selection Process and Pre-arrival Preparations

The background information and data provided by the respondents regarding the selection process for refugees being resettled, whether through Sweden's quota refugee program or Italy's complementary pathways program, reveal a sophisticated and multifaceted approach that has evolved to ensure that the most vulnerable individuals are given an opportunity for a fresh start. By examining the details of each country's strategy, it becomes evident that while commonalities exist in assessing and selecting refugees, distinct differences reflect the unique contexts and priorities at play.

5.1.1 Sweden's Resettlement Program: An In-depth Assessment of Protection Needs

Respondents from the Swedish Migration Agency and UNHCR's representation for the Nordic and Baltic countries explain that Sweden's selection process for quota refugees results from many years of
experience and development to ensure a fair and effective assessment of individual protection needs. This process is divided into several phases and involves collaboration among multiple actors, including UNHCR and the Swedish Migration Agency, represented by respondents in the study.

The respondent from the Swedish Migration Agency says:

The process begins with UNHCR as an initial screening mechanism to identify potential quota refugees. Using a combination of global guidelines and local insights, UNHCR evaluates vulnerability factors among individuals in refugee situations worldwide. This includes threats of persecution, violence, or other circumstances creating an acute need for international protection. Those individuals identified as the most vulnerable and in greatest need of protection are recommended for further evaluation by the Swedish Migration Agency. The Swedish Migration Agency, which plays a crucial role in assessing individuals' applications and protection needs, steps into the process after UNHCR's initial selection. Each application undergoes a thorough review of the asylum grounds presented and the accompanying documentation. This review includes a detailed analysis of the conditions in the individual's country of origin, including political, religious, and social conditions that may affect their safety.

Personal interviews with potential quota refugees are central to the Swedish Migration Agency's evaluation. These interviews are intended to verify the asylum grounds presented and allow individuals to explain further and deepen their experiences. The interviews are structured to illuminate the circumstances that have driven them to seek protection and to determine whether they meet the strict criteria for classification as refugees under international law.

A unique aspect of Sweden's selection process is the Swedish Migration Agency's analysis of whether the individual's protection needs can be met through means other than resettlement. This is a critical part of the assessment process and involves evaluating whether the individual can receive adequate protection and security in another way, such as through local shelter or internal flight within their home country. The respondent from the Swedish Migration Agency explains that this analysis aims to ensure that those selected for resettlement genuinely have an ongoing and acute need for international protection and that no other realistic alternative is possible for them.

5.1.2 Italy's Complementary Pathways Program: A Holistic Assessment

Various respondents from involved actors and organizations in Italy have echoed a similar sentiment. They emphasize the comprehensive nature of the complementary pathways program, highlighting its ability to provide a supportive environment for refugees. In this context, a respondent from FCEI states:

The complementary pathways program's unique approach reflects civil society's profound and enduring commitment to offering vulnerable refugees a welcoming, inclusive, and holistic platform. This process goes beyond a simple legal assessment and aims to understand each individual as a whole.

The respondent from UNHCR Italy says:

UNHCR's initial screening of refugees forms the foundation of Italy's selection process. Using a
combination of global guidelines and local insights, UNHCR identifies the most vulnerable individuals based on age, gender, health, welfare, and physical safety. This selection process is about identifying those in immediate danger and understanding the individual's broader life situation and needs. A unique aspect of Italy's approach is the involvement of Christian civil organizations in the evaluation process. These organizations as bridges between UNHCR's initial screening and the final evaluation for resettlement. Through personal interviews, these Christian civil organizations take on the responsibility of delving into individuals' life stories, experiences, and needs.

During these interviews, an atmosphere of trust and understanding is created, allowing individuals to feel safe sharing their stories. This provides an opportunity to highlight aspects of their lives that may not be evident in documentation, including experiences of persecution, violence, or other traumas that have impacted their lives. The respondents from involved Christian Civil Society Organizations explain that this personal interaction is central to assessing individuals' vulnerability and needs.

Christian Civil Society Organizations verify individuals' documentation to ensure the selection process is based on accurate information. A respondent from Caritas Italiana states:

We verify identity papers, refugee status certificates, and other relevant documents confirming their background and history. This verification is crucial to establishing that the selected individuals are who they claim to be and to avoid fraud or misunderstandings. Italy's holistic approach to the selection process means that selection criteria go beyond immediate threats. A more comprehensive picture is created by assessing individuals' entire life situations, including their health, welfare, and prospects for the future.

According to the respondents, it is not just about offering protection from danger but also about enabling a future where individuals can integrate and become active members of Italian society.

5.1.3 Summary of Prioritized Vulnerability Factors and Connection to Theoretical Perspectives

My analysis of the selection processes underscores how humanistic practice and the existentialist perspective express themselves by emphasizing understanding the individual. The personal interviews and the deep dive into the individual's life narrative, practiced in both countries' selection processes, exemplify the existential quest for meaning. This resonates well with humanism's values of promoting human well-being and spirituality.

The recurring theme in Sweden's and Italy's selection processes is prioritizing the most vulnerable individuals for resettlement. Sweden's actors highlight the thoroughness of their assessment by delving into individuals' asylum grounds and exposure to danger. This is made possible through personal interviews and a broad analysis of the factors shaping individuals' vulnerability. Sweden's selection process for quota refugees demonstrates clear elements of empowerment and advocacy in its approach. By carefully assessing individuals' protection needs and offering alternatives to resettlement, the process aims to give refugees an active role in deciding their future.

On the other hand, Italy's actors emphasize the importance of understanding the individual's life journey and potential for integration. A deeper evaluation occurs through collaboration between UNHCR and Christian civil organizations, going beyond immediate emergencies and encompassing a
broader understanding of the individual's situation and prospects. Italy's holistic approach, primarily through personal interviews and understanding the individual's broader life situation, aligns well with humanistic practice and the existentialist perspective. This in-depth assessment goes beyond immediate threats and emphasizes the individual's potential for meaning and integration.

This section, therefore, highlights that Sweden and Italy, despite their different strategies and approaches, share the goal of offering a second chance to the most vulnerable individuals. Their respective processes reflect their commitment to making legal decisions and creating a future of compassion, hope, and integration. By navigating the complex selection process issues, Sweden and Italy demonstrate their readiness to welcome those in greatest need and offer them an opportunity for a fresh start.

5.2 The Country's Reception of Refugees: A Deep Dive into the Integration Process

Section 4 discussed the theoretical perspectives of empowerment, advocacy, humanistic practice, existentialism, and spirituality in social work, based on Malcolm Payne's book "Modern Social Work Theory" (2020). These theories form the foundation for understanding the social work principles guiding our analytical work in Section 5.2, where we delve into the reception and integration process for refugees in Sweden and Italy. An essential step in understanding Sweden's and Italy's commitment to welcoming refugees is to examine how each country's reception and integration process unfolds. Social workers in both countries explain that these processes go beyond a simple offer of housing; they aim to create a fresh start for refugees, where they can rebuild their lives, achieve independence, and become active citizens in their new societies. This section will explore Sweden's commitment to offering quota refugees a long-term and sustainable integration path and Italy's use of the complementary pathways program and its challenges with temporary protection.

5.2.1 Reception of Quota Refugees in Sweden: Long-term Integration

The Swedish respondent from the UNHCR's representation for the Nordic and Baltic countries explains:

The reception of quota refugees is a well-thought-out and comprehensive process to offer a stable and integrated future to those in the greatest need of protection. The country's integration strategy is built on offering permanent residence permits to quota refugees, providing them with a sense of security, stability, and belonging. This decision is more than just a symbolic gesture; it is a commitment to creating a long-term foundation for successful integration.

The social worker responsible for the municipality's quota refugees explains that these are crucial components they work on to offer successful integration:
• Housing: Housing is a central component of the reception process. Quota refugees are provided housing tailored to their needs and family situations. This aims to give them a roof over their heads and a place to feel safe and start building their new lives.

• Education: Education is critical to breaking barriers and creating opportunities. Quota refugees can access various educational programs, from language courses to vocational training. The social worker explains that this gives them the skills required to become productive members of society and a sense of confidence and independence.

• Language Learning: The Swedish language is the key to fully engaging in Swedish society. To facilitate communication, integration, and participation in the workforce, quota refugees are offered special language courses. These courses are designed to help them acquire the necessary language skills as quickly as possible.

• Job Market Preparation: Understanding the job market system and culture is crucial to succeeding in the workplace. Quota refugees receive support and guidance in job hunting, CV writing, job interview preparation, and career counseling. This aims to increase their chances of quickly entering the job market.

• Community Introduction: To enable refugees to feel engaged in Swedish society, a thorough introduction is crucial. They learn about Swedish norms, values, institutions, and social structures. This helps them feel more confident and prepared for social interaction and integration.

The Swedish social worker finishes by saying:

Sweden sets the tone for an inclusive and long-term reception practice by offering permanent residence permits and a comprehensive integration process. The overall goal is not only to provide quota refugees with a haven but also to allow them to thrive and make a meaningful impact on Swedish society. This deeply rooted commitment reflects Sweden's dedication to human rights and compassion.

The country's integration strategy reflects the fundamental principles of empowerment and advocacy. By offering permanent residence permits and a comprehensive integration process, Sweden aims to allow quota refugees to take control of their own lives and become active citizens in their new communities. This strategy is based on empowering individuals and providing them with the resources and opportunities they need to succeed. In Sweden, the significance of education and language learning, highlighted within the framework of humanistic practice, is crucial in supporting refugees' integration process. These efforts are particularly prominent and form the core of Sweden's strategy for helping refugees become active and independent members of Swedish society.

5.2.2 Reception through Complementary Pathways in Italy: Different Types of Reception and Challenges
The interviewed respondents from involved civil organizations in Italy explain that the complementary pathways program encompasses several pathways for receiving refugees, each designed to address different needs and priorities. The respondent from FCEI says:

This diversity allows Italy to address a broader range of situations and provide refugees various opportunities for protection and integration. Among these pathways, Humanitarian corridors and University corridors stand out as the most central, but there are also Family Reunification Procedures and Labor Mobility Pathways.

Various respondents from Christian Civil Society Organizations actively engaged in these complementary pathways programs provide further insights into their different operations:

- **Humanitarian corridors**: This program focuses on protecting the most vulnerable individuals with acute protection needs. These can be individuals who have been victims of violence, persecution, or other immediate threats in their countries of origin. The respondent from FCEI explains that by offering temporary protection through Humanitarian Corridors, Italy provides immediate protection to those in the most pressing danger. The challenge here lies in balancing this immediate protection with the potential for long-term integration and self-sufficiency, as the residence permit is temporary.

- **University corridors**: This is an education pathway that offers educational opportunities to refugees who already have a bachelor's degree. By giving them the chance to pursue master's studies for two years at an Italian university, this program provides protection and an opportunity for personal development and future prospects. The respondent from Caritas Italiana explains that University Corridors can often be a better chance for integration and independence in Italy since the refugees have already studied at an Italian university. However, the challenge lies in ensuring that education leads to employment opportunities immediately after completing the master's program, as refugees have a temporary residence permit that expires when the program ends. The importance of education and language learning, as highlighted within the framework of humanistic practice, is evident in the efforts made to support refugees' integration process. By offering educational programs through University Corridors, the aim is to build skills and promote confidence and independence.

- **Family Reunification Procedures**: This program focuses on reuniting families that have been separated due to conflict and displacement. This program aims to restore the cohesion and stability of refugees’ lives by facilitating the reunification of family members. The challenge here lies in managing the administrative process and ensuring families can reunite smoothly.

- **Labor Mobility Pathways**: Understanding the labor market system and work culture is crucial for success in the workplace. Labor Mobility Pathways are designed to offer opportunities for refugees to work in Italy and integrate through employment. This program can help refugees...
become self-sufficient and part of Italian society by enabling them to work. The respondents explain that the challenge is ensuring that employment opportunities are meaningful and fair and contribute to integration.

Italy's complementary pathways program offers a unique approach to receiving refugees through temporary protection. Selected refugees receive temporary visas, allowing them to travel to Italy. While this temporary status provides immediate protection, it can pose challenges for refugees and their integration prospects.

A social worker from the Diocese Caritas Assisi, who works with refugees, explains:

The temporary nature of the protection offered through this program can limit refugees' ability to plan for a long-term future. Uncertainty about future protection status and the possibility of permanent settlement can affect their ability to invest in education and career development. This, in turn, can affect their ability to integrate and become self-sufficient in the long term. At the same time, temporary protection can also impact refugees' opportunities to feel fully engaged in Italian society.

Temporary status can create a sense of insecurity and exclusion from certain aspects of community life. It can also affect their access to crucial integration factors like education and employment. Respondents point out that it is essential to note that Italy is also working to minimize these challenges. By offering various types of temporary protection, educational opportunities, family reunification, and employment opportunities, Italy seeks to address different dimensions of refugees' vulnerability and potential.

The respondent from the Community of Sant'Egidio states:

The role of Christian faith-based organizations in reception is central to giving individuals the potential to integrate and become independent community members. However, they also face the challenge of balancing immediate needs with the goal of creating a sustainable and integrated future for refugees.

Here, we see the theories of empowerment and advocacy in harmony with efforts to provide immediate protection to the most vulnerable refugees. At the same time, we encounter challenges closely related to the temporary nature of the protection offered, which can affect refugees' prospects for long-term integration and self-sufficiency. Italy's complementary pathways program is developed and implemented in this context of challenges and efforts.

Finally, within the framework of existentialism and spirituality, the challenges of creating a meaningful and long-term future for refugees are discussed, especially considering the temporary nature of some forms of protection. This calls for understanding refugees’ existential needs and opportunities to explore and express their spirituality and search for meaning.
5.3 Government Agencies vs. Civil Society: A Deeper Analysis of Roles in Sweden and Italy

5.3.1 The Role of Government Agencies and Civil Society in Sweden

The Swedish respondent from UNHCR's representation for the Nordic and Baltic countries explains:

In Sweden, government agencies, especially the Swedish Migration Agency, are the cornerstone of handling quota refugees. The Migration Agency plays a crucial role in the selection process by evaluating applications and deciding on permanent residence permits for the selected individuals. This process involves a thorough analysis of documentation and personal interviews. The personal interviews allow refugees to present their asylum reasons in-depth and share their stories.

Respondents also explain that the state strives for a humanitarian and fair process in selecting the most needy refugees for resettlement in Sweden. This reflects the theory that the state is crucial in protecting refugees and upholding international law and human rights. The UNHCR respondent continues by saying:

At the same time, civil society plays a vital role in supporting these refugees once they arrive in the country. Reception organizations and local communities provide practical support by arranging accommodation, introducing them to Swedish society, and helping them navigate their new lives. This collaboration between the state and civil society creates a sense of community and support for refugees, facilitating their integration process.

Civil society's engagement in supporting refugees through practical efforts and introduction to Swedish culture aligns with the humanistic perspective. It underscores that the integration process is about providing material resources and building individuals' confidence and independence, supporting the theory that a holistic integration strategy is crucial. The collaboration that Sweden has developed between government agencies and civil society in the reception and integration process of refugees suggests that the country applies humanistic practice. This model emphasizes the importance of collaboration to offer refugees a haven and the opportunity to build their lives sustainably, supported by the theory that education and language learning are vital elements for successful integration.

5.3.2 The Role of Government Agencies and Civil Society in Italy

The respondent from UNHCR Italy says:

The roles between the state and civil society in Italy are more nuanced, especially within the complementary pathways program. Government agencies, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of the Interior, are responsible for administratively approving selected individuals and issuing visas for travel to Italy. This approval and issuance process is critical to ensuring that the country's regulations do everything and guarantee that refugees can travel safely and legally. However, civil society plays an even more prominent role in Italy. Christian civil organizations are critical actors throughout the process. Their involvement goes far beyond a simple assessment of vulnerability. They gain a deeper understanding of refugees' needs, experiences, and potential through personal interviews. This engagement from civil society allows for selecting the most suitable candidates for complementary pathways for resettlement. These organizations also play a crucial role in supporting refugees once they arrive in the country.
Given our theoretical perspectives, civil society's emphasis on personal interviews to assess refugees' needs and potential may be subjective and lack the objectivity that government agencies typically require. At the same time, the interplay between government agencies and civil society in Italy reflects the complex nature of refugee reception and integration.

The respondent from the Christian Civil Society Organization, Diaconia Valdese, states:

> In Italy, especially within the complementary pathways program, civil society covers the financial costs of relocation and initial reception. This includes travel and accommodation expenses. This financial commitment demonstrates civil society's dedication and commitment to offering a fresh start to the most vulnerable. It is an example of how civil society in Italy plays a complementary role and takes on concrete and financial responsibilities to enable a successful resettlement process.

Considering our theoretical perspectives highlighting the importance of justice and equality, it is worth noting that the financial responsibility for refugee reception and integration in Italy largely falls on civil society. This can raise questions about economic sustainability and equitable access to resources. In Sweden and Italy, the collaboration between government agencies and civil society creates a comprehensive picture of the reception and integration of quota refugees. The different roles complement each other and work together to ensure that the most vulnerable individuals have an opportunity for a new future and successful integration into their new communities.

### 5.4 Success Factors and Challenges

The theoretical perspectives we explored in section 4 provide us with a framework to analyze the success factors and challenges faced by both countries. These perspectives help us understand the structural and cultural factors that affect the integration of refugees and how government agencies and civil society interact in this process. Sweden and Italy face unique challenges and success factors regarding the reception and integration of quota refugees and refugees through the complementary pathways program. These factors reflect the different aspects of each country's strategies and goals.

#### 5.4.1 Success Factors and Challenges of Resettlement in Sweden

The respondent from the Swedish Migration Agency says:

> The structured introduction programs are a prominent success factor in Sweden's resettlement program. These programs are designed to support refugees in their transition to Swedish society. They include language instruction and practical knowledge about Swedish society, norms, values, and workplace culture. This understanding facilitates integration and helps refugees feel more comfortable and confident in their new homeland.

Resettlement in Sweden is designed to be a comprehensive solution for refugees selected through the quota refugee program. This includes providing housing and basic needs and focusing on broader...
integration aspects. These include language learning, vocational training, labor market preparedness, and introduction to Swedish culture and society. This holistic approach allows for a deeper and more sustainable integration. The respondent continues:

Labor market integration is a central part of resettlement success in Sweden. The program offers various support structures to overcome the challenges of adapting to the Swedish labor market. These may include vocational training, internships, and guidance in job searching. This allows refugees to acquire the necessary skills to become self-sufficient and active workforce members.

In line with our theoretical perspectives, Sweden’s resettlement program prioritizes a holistic approach that includes language learning, vocational training, and introduction to Swedish culture. This aligns with theories of sustainable integration and social capital as a success factor.

However, while Sweden puts significant effort into labor market integration, it can also be one of the biggest challenges refugees face in resettlement in Sweden, as explained by the Swedish social worker:

The Swedish labor market can be complex and demanding, especially for those who need experience. Language barriers further complicate this process, as communication is critical to success in the workplace. Learning Swedish takes time, and finding employment without a firm grasp of the language can be challenging. Adapting to a new culture can be a complex process. Swedish society has its norms, values, and ways of interaction. This can be overwhelming for refugees and requires effort to understand and integrate into the new environment. Cultural differences can also affect work relationships and social integration. The resettlement goal is for refugees to become self-sufficient and integrated into society. This can be a challenge, especially when refugees encounter difficulties in the job market or need to switch career paths due to their background or education. Prospects for self-sufficiency can be influenced by various factors, including labor market demand and individuals' existing skills.

In conclusion, Sweden's resettlement program aims to offer a comprehensive solution for refugees to integrate into Swedish society. The program's successes include its structured introduction programs and support structures for labor market integration. The challenges include labor market integration, language barriers, and cultural adaptation. When analyzing these challenges, we can see that language barriers and cultural adaptation in Sweden are issues that our theoretical perspectives can help us understand. These challenges relate to identity and cultural diversity theories and highlight the need to create an inclusive environment for refugees. By adapting and improving these support measures, Sweden can facilitate a smoother transition for refugees to become independent and active members of society.

5.4.2 Success Factors and Challenges of Complementary Pathways (CP) in Italy

Complementary Pathways (CP) in Italy offers a unique opportunity for refugees to migrate in a privileged, safe, and legal manner. This opportunity is precious for those who have already endured many hardships. The respondent from the civil organization Sant' Egidio, who started the first complementary pathway in 2016 in Lebanon, says:
The program's journey is not just a physical move but symbolizes a chance for survival and a better future. The fact that this journey is legal and safe provides a sense of security and an invaluable opportunity for a fresh start.

The program provides an opportunity for legal and safe travel for refugees, aligning with migration justice theories and rights-based perspectives. However, the program also challenges the traditional division of responsibilities between the state and civil society, which can be seen as an example of how the theories can be applied. The respondent from Caritas Italiana explains:

A prominent aspect of CP is its focus on community sponsorship, a concept rooted in Canada's resettlement program. Interestingly, the Italian government sets quotas for reception, but civil society receives, supports, and finances the refugees. This goes beyond state responsibility and creates a community where citizens and volunteers shape a refugee's new life. CP is a well-organized program that differs from traditional refugee reception by integrating education, vocational training, and community introduction more deeply. It creates a comprehensive view of integration rather than just focusing on basic needs. This is a significant success factor because traditional reception in Italy rarely offers comprehensive support or education. The CP program has a structured and coordinated approach, where different components, such as the church, private sector, institutions, and volunteers, collaborate to support refugees in their transition.

The respondents from the organizations say that a clear positive outcome of the CP program is the successful integration of refugees. It has been shown that those who have gone through this program have a higher degree of integration success than those who have undergone traditional reception in Italy. This positive impact has also spread to other countries where similar community sponsorship and complementary pathways programs have been experimented with. The international cooperation and exchange of experiences resulted directly from the CP program and its success. But there are also challenges. The respondent from FCEI says:

A challenge we have identified is that some refugees within the CP program choose to leave the country when the program is still ongoing, creating concerns about the program's long-term sustainability. The recipient's decision to leave may be linked to various factors, and it is an issue that the program must constantly address. Another challenge is managing expectations. Since the CP program offers more comprehensive integration than other resettlement programs, refugees may develop unrealistic expectations about their future in Italy. This can affect their level of success in integration.

The respondent from Caritas mentions another challenge:

A central challenge within the CP program in Italy is that reception varies depending on the community's resources and preparedness. Some communities may need more resources to handle refugees with complex needs. These inequalities can affect the quality of reception and integration of refugees. Geographic location, community size, and resource availability all play a role in this challenge.

The CP program sometimes faces limitations due to a need for more resources. The respondent from the Community of Sant'Egidio states:
Additional financial support is sometimes required to provide more comprehensive support to refugees with different needs. Investments in therapeutic support and education for the host community could improve the program and better meet the multifaceted needs of refugees. There has also been discussions regarding whether civil society is taking over the government's responsibility through programs like CP. This has led to some hesitancy in other countries to implement similar programs. At the same time, the Italian government has yet to receive any refugees through relocation. This raises questions about the Italian government's role and responsibility towards refugees and whether civil society should take on this responsibility to a greater extent.

In conclusion, the Complementary Pathways program in Italy is not just an alternative migration route but an opportunity for a fresh start for refugees. The program has clear advantages in terms of integration and creates a stronger sense of community. However, it faces challenges that need to be addressed for the program to remain sustainable and effective. Nevertheless, its impact has been significant and has inspired other countries to consider similar solutions. It opens up a broader dialogue about refugee reception and the role of civil society in supporting the most vulnerable.
6. Discussion

This chapter delves deeper into the central themes that have emerged through the analysis of the roles of civil society and the state in the social work with refugees in Sweden and Italy. The focus is directed towards the different methods employed in these countries to address refugee reception and integration and how the interaction and collaboration between civil society and the state evolve in this complex context.


The role of civil society in social work with refugees is a dynamic and multifaceted component that significantly influences today's social work for refugees. Blomqvist Mickelsson's doctoral thesis, "A Nordic Sport Social Work in the Context of Refugee Reception" (2023), sheds light on an exciting dimension of this topic by focusing on the role of the sports movement in this context, particularly in Sweden and the Nordic countries.

In the current global context of increasing refugee flows and complex migration patterns, civil society has become critical in providing support and relief to refugees. Civil society organizations, including the sports movement, can rapidly mobilize resources and volunteers and act flexibly in crises. This makes them essential for providing immediate assistance and humanitarian efforts to refugees. In Sweden, the actions of civil society, including the sports movement, have been particularly prominent in refugee reception. They have acted as "first responders," relieving the public sector and offering practical and emotional support to refugees. This model has often had a more humanitarian character and has been less influenced by political bureaucracies. This has greatly benefited refugees in transit countries or those waiting for their asylum applications to be processed.

Compared to Sweden, the role of civil society in other European countries, such as Italy and other Southern European countries, has looked different regarding the extent of the refugee crisis and the role of civil society. In these countries, civil society organizations have often played a more prominent role in providing direct support to refugees and migrants. They have been at the forefront and have tried to fill the gaps left by the public sector. The differences in the roles and interactions between civil society and the state among countries have a crucial impact on social work with refugees. In Sweden, civil society has gradually evolved into an integrated partner with the state, complementing and strengthening its efforts. This collaboration has led to a more coordinated and effective response to the refugee crisis. Civil society has become a valuable resource in improving refugees' living conditions and integration. In Italy and other Southern European countries, civil society, at least at certain times, has been forced to act as the leading actor in refugee reception. This situation has created both challenges and opportunities. On the one hand, civil society has been a necessary savior when the public sector has failed to provide sufficient support. On the other hand, it has placed a
heavy burden on civil society and forced it to take on a more significant share of the responsibility for supporting refugees and migrants.

These dynamic relationships between the state and civil society are central to social work with refugees today. Both parties have their strengths and limitations. The state's resources and ability to establish policies and legislation are crucial in creating an overall refugee reception and integration framework. On the other hand, civil society's speed, local knowledge, and ability to mobilize volunteers and resources offer an invaluable resource for addressing the most urgent needs of refugees. It is also important to note that these dynamic roles and dynamics can change over time. Civil society can gradually become institutionalized as a state partner, leading to more coordination and long-term planning. On the other hand, political changes and economic pressures on the public sector may require civil society to take on an even more significant role and responsibility.

In summary, civil society is a critical and dynamic actor in social work with refugees. Its role varies significantly between countries and over time, and to address the challenges in refugee reception effectively, it is necessary to understand and adapt strategies to the specific conditions in each context. Close cooperation between the state and civil society can create a more holistic and effective response to the ongoing refugee crisis and improve the living conditions of refugees worldwide. It is a dynamic relationship that will continue to evolve in response to the changing needs and circumstances of today's global refugee crisis.

6.2 Two Methods, Two Worlds: A Comparison of Top-Down and Bottom-Up Approaches in Refugee Work

Joanne van Selm's research study (2023) highlights two distinct methods in refugee work: a top-down and a bottom-up approach. These methods significantly impact the roles of civil society and the state in social work with refugees, both in Sweden and Italy.

As van Selm mentioned, the top-down method involves decisions and guidelines typically coming from government agencies or international organizations and then being implemented at lower levels, including civil society. In Sweden, this approach is often followed when shaping refugee reception. Government agencies like the Migration Agency have a predominant role in shaping and controlling refugee reception. This means that the state provides frameworks and guidelines for civil society. Civil society plays a crucial role in implementing and complementing the measures and services provided by the state. However, the space for influencing overall guidelines and strategies is more limited, as the state usually makes the overarching decisions.

In contrast, the bottom-up approach adopted in Italy emphasizes the active participation of civil society in designing and implementing refugee reception and integration programs. This method gives civil society a greater voice in shaping strategies and guidelines. In Italy, civil society is a central actor in the Complementary Pathways (CP) program and actively participates in the selection process
for refugees included in the program. This means that civil society directly impacts the program's design and that refugees get the opportunity to establish themselves in the country.

In social work with refugees, it's important to note that both methods have advantages and challenges. The top-down process can ensure uniform guidelines and resource allocation, while the bottom-up approach can be more adaptable and directly involve civil society. The discussion of how much space civil society should have and how much influence it should have on policies and strategies is a crucial aspect of social work with refugees, and it's a question that must be handled thoughtfully and considering the current circumstances.

6.2.1 Top-Down Approach: The Roles of the State and Civil Society in Refugee Reception in Sweden

Sweden's top-down approach to social work with refugees involves both civil society and state roles, and there are several dimensions to explore here, with both strengths and challenges.

Civil society organizations, including the Red Cross and Amnesty International, have historically played a crucial role in providing refugees with the essential humanitarian support they need upon arrival in the country. This includes offering shelter, food, and other basic needs. The importance of this effort cannot be overstated, as it directly impacts the well-being and security of refugees. When these basic needs are met, refugees can focus on other essential integration aspects, such as language education and employment opportunities. Civil society's involvement in this phase is critical, and it provides a sense of welcome and solidarity among refugees and the broader population. For social work, this means there is a foundation to build upon, a sense of security for refugees that is crucial for their successful integration into society.

Integration is a central part of social work with refugees in Sweden, and here, civil society organizations play a key role. They offer language education, assistance with employment, and an introduction to the culture and society. This is not just about providing refugees with necessary skills; it's also about creating a sense of belonging. By bridging different cultures and fostering understanding, they promote diversity and inclusion, which is crucial in reducing the risk of segregation. This means that social work isn't just about providing services; it's also about creating conditions for societal integration and coexistence.

Another significant dimension is the awareness-raising efforts that civil society organizations undertake. They actively work to combat prejudice and promote tolerance and inclusion. They create a more favorable attitude by informing society about the challenges refugees face. This awareness-raising work is critical for creating an environment that supports refugees. It counters discrimination and promotes a culture of acceptance. It's also a way to engage the broader population in social work with refugees and encourage them to participate in the integration process actively. For social work, this means it's not just about supporting refugees in their journeys but also about influencing the entire society to create a more welcoming and inclusive atmosphere.
However, there are challenges in this top-down approach as well. Many civil society organizations rely on government or public funding. This financial dependence creates concerns that organizations may lose their independence and objectivity. Balancing the need for financing with the preservation of independence is critical. Organizations becoming too dependent on the state may be less inclined to question or challenge government decisions or policies that negatively affect refugees. It's essential to ensure that organizations have sufficient financial security without sacrificing their independence. For social work, this means navigating this complex landscape of funding and politics and being flexible enough to remain objective while actively supporting the best interests of refugees.

Another challenge is the diverse structure of civil society organizations. Working with so many different organizations poses challenges regarding coordination and efficiency. Avoiding overlapping or duplicative efforts can be complicated, which requires active collaboration and a shared vision. For social work, this means acting as a cohesive force and coordinating resources in the most beneficial way for refugees.

Finally, even though civil society is diverse, it doesn't always reflect the diversity of opinions and perspectives in society as a whole. This can mean that some voices are not heard enough. For social work to be successful, it's essential to consider all perspectives and experiences. It's a challenge to ensure that civil society is representative of the diversity of society. It requires effort to include voices that might not be as commonly heard and actively seek different perspectives. For social work, this means being aware of this lack of representation and actively striving to increase the diversity of voices heard and considered.

The state's role in this top-down approach is equally significant. The Migration Agency, responsible for asylum assessment and resettlement, has created a well-defined and structured process. This can enable faster and more efficient handling of applications, which is crucial when there is increased pressure on migration authorities. For social work, this means there is a framework to operate within, with clear rules and guidelines governing interactions with refugees. It also offers a degree of legal certainty for refugees, as decisions are made according to Swedish laws and international conventions, providing fundamental fairness in the process.

On the other hand, this structured process can be less flexible in handling rapidly changing situations, such as a sudden increase in the number of refugees. Bureaucracy and regulations can feel constraining for social workers trying to meet refugees' individual and urgent needs. This is a challenge because social work cannot constantly adapt quickly enough to changes in refugees' situations. Long waiting times and bureaucratic obstacles can be frustrating and stressful for refugees in an uncertain situation who need immediate support and protection.

An advantage of the Swedish approach is the ability to allocate resources and resettlement spots strategically. This allows for the even distribution of refugees across different parts of the country, promoting integration and support efforts. However, there is a risk that critical local perspectives and
needs are overlooked when decisions are made at a central level. Social workers at the local level have a deeper understanding of the specific challenges refugees may face in different areas. When decisions are made at a higher level, these insights and experiences can easily be overlooked, leading to refugees not effectively receiving the support they need. Finding a balance between centralization and consideration of local needs is a challenge.

In summary, the Swedish top-down approach has strengths and challenges affecting social work with refugees today. There is a clear structure and resource allocation, but there is also a lack of flexibility and a risk that essential perspectives may be overlooked. Social work must navigate this complex reality and work to balance the needs of refugees with the demands and limitations of the top-down approach chosen by Sweden. This means being flexible, responsive, and actively working to ensure that refugees receive the support they need and that society is inclusive and supportive. It's a challenge but also an opportunity to create a welcoming and diverse nation where refugees can build new lives and contribute to the future of society.

6.2.2 Bottom-Up Approach: Civil Society's Direct Impact on Refugee Reception and Integration in Italy

In Italy, the role of civil society in social work with refugees has a unique structure that differs from that in Sweden. Civil society organizations and volunteers directly impact refugee reception and integration in the country. This bottom-up approach has several dimensions, with strengths and challenges, that affect social work in various ways. Civil society organizations and volunteers in Italy are vital in supporting refugees in their integration process. Their proximity to refugees and ability to adapt to individual needs are significant strengths. They can offer personalized care and support tailored to each refugee, which can be crucial for their well-being and integration. This person-centered approach allows refugees to feel seen and heard, promoting a sense of belonging and security.

The bottom-up approach adopted in Italy gives civil society an active role in selecting refugees for the CP (Civil Protection) program. This means civil society determines which refugees can establish themselves in the country. It creates a greater sense of local participation and community and allows civil society to adapt reception and support to local needs and resources. This can be especially valuable in smaller communities and areas where conditions vary significantly. The voluntary sector in Italy is an invaluable resource in social work with refugees. Volunteer organizations and individuals have been a significant force in supporting refugees in their integration process. Their dedication and enthusiasm create a sense of community and support for refugees. They can offer everything from language education to practical assistance in finding housing and employment. This voluntary effort complements state resources and services.
A challenge with this bottom-up approach is that it can be less structured and uniform compared to a top-down approach. Civil society organizations and volunteers are diverse and may have different techniques and methods. This can make it challenging to ensure that all refugees have access to the same level of support and opportunities. Careful coordination and communication are needed to avoid overlapping or lacking support measures. The increased involvement of civil society in decisions about refugee reception can be sensitive to political shifts and changes in public attitudes. If civil society plays a strong role in determining which refugees are included in the programs, it can be vulnerable to political decisions affecting resources and programs. Civil society needs a stable foundation and is not overly dependent on political support.

In summary, the Italian bottom-up approach to refugee reception and integration demonstrates how the roles of civil society and the state in social work can vary significantly. Civil society has an active and multifaceted role, allowing for person-centered support and local adaptation. It complements the state's efforts. Challenges include the need for coordination and management of political pressure. Discussing these issues is necessary to optimize civil society's role in social work with refugees and ensure an inclusive and practical integration process.

6.2.3 Summary
In conclusion, these two different methods for managing refugee reception and integration, used in Sweden and Italy, show how the roles of civil society and the state in social work can vary significantly. Both methods have their strengths and challenges.

In Sweden, civil society plays a crucial role as a service provider, while the state has more vital control over guidelines and strategies. This creates order and structure but can be less flexible in meeting individual needs and rapidly changing situations. In Italy, civil society has a more active role in shaping and implementing refugee reception and integration programs, providing greater flexibility and adaptation to individual needs. This can create a stronger sense of participation and support but can be more challenging to coordinate and standardize.

Both methods have their advantages and challenges, and it's essential to continue discussing the roles civil society and the state should play in social work with refugees to create the most effective and equitable process possible.
7. Conclusion

The escalating refugee crisis has forced both nations and the global community to confront one of the most pressing and complex challenges of modern times: providing safe and legal pathways for people fleeing for their lives. Third-country solutions, such as resettlement and complementary pathways that include community sponsorship, emerge as a necessary strategy to holistically address the crisis's extensive humanitarian, social, and practical challenges. This summary conclusion, highlighting both progress and shortcomings, is based on a deep analysis of Sweden's resettlement model, Italy's experience with community sponsorship, and their overall impact on refugees' lives and host countries' societal structures.

Sweden's work in resettlement has been recognized as an example of how a nation can provide protection for vulnerable individuals. Through collaboration with international organizations like UNHCR, Sweden has actively selected and supported refugees needing protection. This effort extends beyond just providing accommodation and includes a structure for integration that assists refugees in rebuilding their lives with support and resources from the host country. Analyses have involved the application of theories of sustainable integration and social capital in Sweden's resettlement program. However, it's important to note that a comprehensive conclusion regarding Sweden's resettlement work would have required more gathered data, including perspectives from social workers and refugees, to offer a more comprehensive picture of the program. This complexity emphasizes the need for ongoing evaluation and a broader understanding of the program's impact.

Italy's use of complementary pathways, primarily through community sponsorship, offers a profound insight into the importance of engaging and involving local communities in the reception process. By establishing bridges between newcomers and existing communities, these pathways create mutual understanding and a sense of belonging. This model positively affects refugees in terms of faster integration and reduced cultural isolation but also highlights the need for a balance between civil society efforts and government support to ensure long-term success.

However, it is essential to be aware of the challenges and limitations that these programs still face. The example of Italy's community-based sponsorship reveals the importance of increased government support to promote and strengthen the program and guarantee its sustainability over time. Additionally, despite Sweden's outstanding efforts in resettlement, discussions about increased use of community sponsorship have emerged. This indicates that these programs are dynamic and must be constantly evaluated and adapted to meet shifting needs and achieve desired outcomes.

Beyond offering a safe and legal pathway for refugees, resettlement and complementary pathways have several positive consequences. These alternative pathways reduce the risk of dangerous and illegal journeys, reducing the danger of human smuggling and exploitation. Furthermore, these solutions enable receiving countries to proactively plan and prepare for a smooth integration process, ultimately contributing to social harmony and economic cooperation. Central to this discussion is
promoting and supporting third-country solutions like resettlement and community-based sponsorship. Their role extends beyond moral commitments and constitutes a strategic and sustainable solution. By providing safe and legal pathways for people in flight, nations demonstrate their ability to act under international human rights norms and lay the foundation for a global community where dignity and justice are at the forefront. It is important to note that these solutions also have a relieving impact on transit countries, which often must receive a large share of refugees due to their geographical proximity to conflict areas. By offering safe and legal pathways, recipient countries like Sweden and Italy facilitate the lives of directly affected refugees and ease the burden on transit countries grappling with this humanitarian crisis.

Finally, in line with a deeper understanding of social work, it is essential to acknowledge the social context’s crucial role in the integration process. Social workers and community actors have a unique opportunity to facilitate the transition for newcomers by offering psychosocial support, orientation, and resources that promote their independence and inclusion. By supporting these professionals and creating a community structure that encourages participation and mutual respect, host countries can build bridges to a sustainable future for refugees and their citizens. Ultimately, the success of these third-country solutions requires a coordinated and focused effort. International cooperation, political will, and commitment from both government actors and civil society are crucial for these strategies to be fully realized. By investing in safe and legal pathways, the world demonstrates its ability to address the challenges posed by the refugee crisis and create a sustainable future where compassion, mutual understanding, and cooperation are fundamental principles. Through these actions, the world can achieve a vision where all individuals, regardless of their origins, can thrive and contribute to a shared and enriching humanity.
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Annex 1: Interview Questions for Stakeholder Organizations

About Your Organization:
- What is the mission and purpose of your organization?
- Could you describe the scope of work your organization is engaged in and the specific areas you focus on?

Resettlement/Complementary Pathways for Refugees:
- Could you elaborate on your organization's involvement in resettlement/complementary pathways for refugees? Which countries does your organization operate in?
- How and for what reasons did your organization become engaged in implementing resettlement/complementary pathways for refugees?

Advantages and Drawbacks of Resettlement/Complementary Pathways:
- From your perspective, what is your impression of resettlement/complementary pathways programs?
- What would you highlight as some of the positive aspects of resettlement/the complementary pathways program?
- Conversely, what would you identify as potential challenges or drawbacks of resettlement/the complementary pathways program? If applicable, what improvements could enhance its effectiveness?

Looking Ahead:
- Could you provide insights into how your organization envisions its role in resettlement/the complementary pathways programs?
Annex 2: Questions for Social Workers in Sweden’s Municipalities/Diocesan Caritas Communities

About Your Municipality/Diocese:

- Could you outline the mission and objectives of your Municipality/Diocesan Caritas? What are the primary areas of focus in your work?
- Could you elaborate on your role within the organization? Are you primarily a social worker, or do you also hold other responsibilities?

Resettlement/Complementary Pathways for Refugees:

- Can you provide more information about the beneficiaries you receive and are responsible for under resettlement/the complementary pathway program? Could you specify their countries of origin and the circumstances they come from?
- What kind of support and assistance does your Municipality/Diocesan Caritas provide to the resettlement/complementary pathways program beneficiaries?
- Could you describe the hosting process and its duration for the beneficiaries?
- How does your organization aid these beneficiaries in integrating into society, particularly in education, employment, and community engagement?
- What follow-up activities or support mechanisms are in place for beneficiaries after the hosting period?

Impact of Resettlement/the Complementary Pathway + Pros and Cons:

- From your perspective, how do you perceive the impact of the hosting program on the beneficiaries?
- What aspects of Resettlement/the Complementary Pathway program do you see as having room for improvement or identifying potential drawbacks?
- Conversely, what positive outcomes do you observe from Resettlement/the Complementary Pathway program?

Looking Forward:

- What are your expectations for the future prospects of the beneficiaries hosted through the program?
- How do you anticipate the trajectory of Resettlement/the Complementary Pathway program in the coming years? Is your Municipality/Diocesan Caritas planning to continue its involvement in the program?
Annex 3: Questions for Beneficiaries/Refugees in Different Caritas Diocesan Communities

About Your Life:
- Could you share some insights about yourself? Where are you initially from, and what was life like for you before coming to Italy?
- What were the reasons behind your decision to flee your home country? Could you describe the process of leaving your country and your journey to the refugee camp?
- Amid your journey, what were the most significant challenges you faced during your escape?

Complementary Pathways for Refugees:
- Which specific complementary pathway program are you enrolled in, and could you explain how you became a part of this pathway?
- How does the complementary pathway program contribute to your life? In what ways does it support your integration into society, such as in education, employment, and community engagement?

Impact of the Complementary Pathways + Pros and Cons:
- From your perspective, how do you feel the hosting program is influencing your life?
- Are there any aspects of the Complementary Pathway program that you find challenging or believe could be improved?
- On a positive note, what do you consider to be the strengths or advantages of the Complementary Pathway program?

Looking Forward:
- What are your plans once your hosting period concludes? How do you envision your future, either within Italy or outside its borders?
- Could you share your dreams and aspirations? What would you like to pursue or work on in the future?