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The land of a thousand refused asylum seekers

The state of the resources, coping strategies, and prospects for the future: experiences of refused asylum seekers living in Finland

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Abstract

Title: The land of a thousand refused asylum seekers – the state of resources, coping strategies and prospects for the future: experiences of refused asylum seekers living in Finland

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Key words: Refused asylum seekers, resources, coping strategies, social capital, agency

The aim of the thesis was to examine the experiences of refused asylum seekers in Finland by finding out their state of resources, coping strategies and prospects for the future. In addition, the thesis considered the respondents' messages to Finnish decision-makers. In this thesis, the term of a refused asylum seeker is used for individuals whose claim for asylum has been refused by the Finnish Immigration Service and who additionally may have an ongoing subsequent asylum application or appeal. The study results were based on semi-structured interviews with six refused asylum seekers. The sustainable livelihoods framework was utilized to design the interview questions and analyse results regarding resources. The theoretical framework consisted of these concepts: social inclusion/exclusion, social capital, resilience and agency. The data was analysed by using thematic analysis method. The research questions were following: a) how do the refused asylum seekers describe their resources?, b) how do the refused asylum seekers describe their coping strategies?, c) how do the refused asylum seekers perceive their future?, and d) what are the messages of the refused asylum seekers to Finnish decision-makers?

The results from this study indicate that the interviewees lacked access to different resources due to their legal status. Their social assets were generally quite limited, but existing networks had a valuable meaning for them. Access to health services was constrained, and the need for psychosocial support was particularly high. The respondents coped usually by building social networks and working, in addition, some experiences were gained of the grey market. The interviewees were reluctant towards asking people for help, financially or otherwise, and the feelings of mental distress were usually not shared with anyone. The overarching similarity was the fear of being deported. The interviewees hoped to learn the Finnish language, get a job and study a vocational qualification. The main messages of the respondents were that their asylum cases were not comprehensively and correctly addressed, and the legal assistance was inadequate. In addition, the respondents had a desire to be included in the Finnish labour market, and they did not want to return to the country of origin even though they had received a negative decision on their asylum application.

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Abbreviations

CFR	Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
ECHR	European Convention on Human Rights
ECtHR	European Court of Human Rights
EU	European Union
FRA	European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights
HDL	Helsinki Deaconess Institute
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
PICUM	Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants
PTSD	Post-traumatic stress disorder
SPR	Finnish Red Cross
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
VSE	Victim Support Europe

1 Introduction

Refused asylum seekers, including undocumented migrants, are a marginalized and vulnerable group in Finnish society. Excluding undocumented migrants out of services and society does not remove undocumented from the country. Becoming an undocumented has become a permanent phenomenon in Finland, which cannot be solved by tightening the access to livelihoods (URMI, 2018; Ambrosini, 2017). According to The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR, 2018), millions of migrants around the world are insufficiently protected; the entire international human rights framework applies to all migrants regardless of their location and status. In addition, states should protect and uphold the rights of groups with specific needs: children, trafficked persons, migrant workers, stateless persons and persons with disabilities. Undocumented migrants are helped in Finland by many organizations and networks that provide health services, accommodation, food, clothing, legal aid and peer support. The most prominent of these are, the Global Clinic, the Finnish Refugee Advice Centre, the church parishes, the Finnish Blue Ribbon, the Finnish Red Cross (SPR) and the Helsinki Deaconess Institute (HDL). Private Finns alone or in informal networks also offer help and support to undocumented people (URMI, 2018).

At present, the exact number of undocumented migrants in Finland is unknown but it is increasing. There are an estimated between 3,000-10,000 undocumented migrants in the country, including families with children (HDL, 2019). More measures must be expected from Finnish decision-makers on this issue. Because of the nature of the phenomenon, it is impossible to know exactly the number of undocumented migrants; the undocumented are not in the “register” of any authorities, organizations or other actors (Jauhiainen, Gadd & Jokela, 2018). The issue of asylum seekers has been increasingly urgent in European countries, and the support for anti-migrant political parties across Europe has increased (Ghorashi, de Boer & ten Holder, 2018). The challenge of refused asylum seekers puts pressure on several countries that have received asylum seekers, and the European Union (EU) as a whole. People have the inherent human rights and the basic right to seek asylum, including the right to non-refoulement (art. 33) in the 1951 Refugee Convention (UNHCR, 2011); on the other hand, Nation States have the right to determine who comes to the country, and the rights to control their own borders according to the international law (Todorov, 2014; Vosyliūtė & Joki, 2018). There is a tension between these rights. There has been changes in the legal procedures regarding immigration policy in Finland after the year of 2015 that have weakened the positions of asylum seekers (Saarikkomäki et al., 2018). As a whole, there is uncertainty about how to operate with undocumented migrants in Finland (Jauhiainen, 2018).

The media has increased discrimination towards asylum seekers in the way they have presented the group in Finland (Yijälä and Nyman, 2017). The societal awakening for upturn in the growth of undocumented migrants so far has not led to the prevention, comprehensive mapping nor support of undocumented migrants, but rather to the reduction of their rights and opportunities. More discussion is focused on forced deportation (Ahonen & Kallius, 2019). Topic of the thesis is under-researched, and it is especially topical in Finland because of the growing number of undocumented migrants (URMI, 2018).

1.1 Aims and research questions

The aim of the thesis is to examine the experiences of refused asylum seekers in Finland by identifying their state of resources, coping strategies and prospects for the future. In addition, the thesis considers the respondents' messages to Finnish decision-makers. The research questions are following:

1. How do the refused asylum seekers describe their resources?
2. How do the refused asylum seekers describe their coping strategies?
3. How do the refused asylum seekers perceive their future?
4. What are the messages of the refused asylum seekers to Finnish decision-makers?

The purpose of this thesis is to convey information, primarily for the research field of social work and human rights, and for those who work currently with refused asylum seekers and undocumented migrants in Finland. Overall purpose of the study is to convey information for a wider audience about the cumbersome situation that several individuals face in Finland. Participants in the study are persons who are, or have been asylum seekers, and their asylum application has been rejected. Researcher has interviewed people who are still registered in the reception centres, have received a negative decision on an asylum application for the first time or more, and their appeal process or a subsequent application is ongoing. In addition, researcher has interviewed failed asylum seekers who have no other grounds for staying in the country and may be subject to voluntary return or deportation. There are several reasons why this target group has been selected for the research. The main reason is that the target group is highly vulnerable, powerless, and socially excluded and marginalized; owning notably limited social networks and support (HDL, 2017). This area of study is under-researched in Finland (URMI, 2018). In addition, it has been recognized that the undocumented migrants are left without a voice in the conversation about themselves in Finland (Jauhiainen et al., 2018).

This thesis contributes to bringing out the voices of these people. Because of the lack of rights and accessibility to assets, it is important to pay attention to respondents' livelihoods. In order to know how the group should be helped, more should be known about how these people cope in Finland. A lack of assets can lead to absolute poverty and destitution. In this thesis, a sustainable livelihoods framework (Crawley et al., 2011) is used to analyze the assets of individuals. By resources, the study refers to human, social, physical, and public assets which are, or are not, available for the refused asylum seekers. Resources and coping strategies are better defined and discussed in the section of "Planning the qualitative interviews".

1.2 Limitations of the study

This study focuses on the experiences of a considerably small group of people, however, it recognizes the large scale of the challenges and problems related to the issue that are spread beyond national borders to the international and global arenas of political decision making. The study gives a limited perspective because of the number of participants, but the goal of it is to do perform the research with much as quality as possible. A more extensive description of the issues related to the topic is given in the background material, which has been delimited mostly considering situation in Finland.

The material for this research has been collected exclusively from Finland. The interviews were done in Helsinki, which is the capital of Finland. At the time of the interview, every participant had residence in the Metropolitan Area of Finland. The studies have shown that the most of undocumented migrants are living and using services in the Metropolitan area of Finland (Jauhiainen et al., 2018), thus the research was appropriate to perform there. In addition, the day centres for undocumented people, which co-operated with the study, are operating in the Helsinki area. The field work was

carried out between February-April in 2019. The interviewees selected for this study were individuals who had received a negative decision on their asylum application.

One limitation of the study is that for ethical reasons, no precise information about interviewees will be provided. In addition, there is a constant change and progress in legal procedures and matters in Finland concerning the policies towards asylum seekers. This study therefore gives only a limited and time-related background for the topic. In the research, the focus is not on any specific group within refused asylum seekers. For reasons as the usual reluctance to cooperate with any officials or researchers this group is hard-to-reach (Crawley et al., 2011). Therefore, no further delimitation has been made with the interviewees. The aim of this research is not to take a stand on individual asylum cases because the researcher has no legitimacy to do so, instead the objective is to bring out the narratives of the respondents.

1.3 Relevance to social work and human rights

Receiving a negative residence permit decision may have life-threatening consequences for an individual. Basic human rights of people are contested in the lives of refused asylum seekers. Finland is responsible, as a Nation State, to follow the established human rights laws. Finland is part of the EU and must therefore follow the principles and guidelines directed to the EU members. Because of human right violations and social exclusion in their countries of origin, people have fled from there, and sought security and better conditions for their lives in Finland (Korhonen & Siitonen, 2018). The right to seek asylum is universal, and included in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) in article 14:

- (1) Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution.
- (2) This right may not be invoked in the case of prosecutions genuinely arising from non-political crimes or from acts contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

The prevalent law concerning asylum seekers is the Convention Relating the Status of Refugees (the 1951 Refugee Convention), which Finland has ratified. The cornerstone of the 1951 Refugee Convention is the principle of non-refoulement contained in article 33. According to this principle, a refugee should not be returned to a country where he or she faces serious threats to his or her life or freedom. This protection may not be claimed by refugees who are reasonably regarded as a danger to the security of the country, or having been convicted of a particularly serious crime, are considered a danger to the community (UNHCR, 2011). Considering human right in the situation of returning the applicant to his or her country of origin, and the principle of non-refoulement, there are several laws and rulings which are protecting the applicant besides the Refugee Convention. These are; the UDHR, the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (CFR) and the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). The EU Return Directive refers to human rights principles and safeguarding, which include carrying out return in a humane and dignified manner, respecting the principle of non-refoulement and seeking the best interest of the child, the right to a fair and efficient asylum procedure and legal remedies, and giving priority to voluntary departure over forced return. The EU states should either return illegal immigrants or grant them legal status, thus avoiding situations of “legal limbo” (Caritas Europa, 2018; European Commission, 2019).

Social workers can improve the situation of the target group by engaging in strategies that support client participation. The social work profession should build courage to intervene at policy level in greater measures. Anti-discriminatory and anti-oppressive social work approaches should be

implemented to a greater extent, and the importance of advocacy be highlighted (Valtonen, 2001). The relevance of the thesis for the field of social work is established as social workers have the responsibility to uphold the universal human rights. Also advocating for human rights in the occupation should be more prevalent. The research depicts the social environment of refused asylum seekers in Finland. Social work is a practice which should work towards making human rights come into practice. Change is necessary in situations where human rights come into a question. Social workers according to Valtonen (ibid.) should promote immigrant participation in the wider society, have a mandate that goes beyond that of guaranteeing access to welfare benefits. The empowerment for full participation and effective practice of citizenship include capacity building, networking of resources and fighting discriminatory barriers. These methods are also relevant for establishing a space for refused asylum seekers in Finnish society. According to Ahonen and Kallius (2019), in the studies of undocumented migrants, it is important to avoid the narrative of victimization. Undocumented people are active members of Finnish society, and it is essential to listen to their voices.

2 Background

Lyytinen (2019) describes how in the past, the Russian Revolution and the First World War brought refugees to Finland. However, relatively few refugees have arrived in Finland in the 1970s and 1980s, only some refugees from Chile and Vietnam. In the 1990s, refugees came to Finland as a result of the Somali Civil War. People from the Balkan Peninsula also fled to Finland due to the wars of dissolution of the former Yugoslavia. In the 2000s and 2010s, Finland has received refugees from countries such as Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia and Syria. Ministry of the Interior (2019) in Finland states that since 2000, Finland has received 1,500–6,000 asylum seekers each year, aside from 2015. In addition, Finland receives quota refugees. In 2018, the number of new asylum seekers fell below the level seen before 2015. The large increase in the number of undocumented migrants in 2017-2018 has raised public and political debate about the subject in Finland (Ahonen & Kallius, 2019).

In 2015, a total of 32,477 people applied for asylum in Finland and most of them arrived in the autumn. This was the highest amount of asylum applications ever in the history of Finland. Every single one of these applications, which were not withdrawn, had been answered and the decisions had been all done by October 2017 (The Finnish Immigration Service, 2017). The situation of the influx of asylum seekers to Finland in 2015 was responded to by the tightening immigration and asylum policy and the legislative changes based on them. The goal of the Finnish government was in the short term to “Break the uncontrolled flow of asylum seekers into the country, to get asylum costs under control and to integrate effectively into those who received asylum”. In order to accomplish these goals Finland reviewed the possibilities of internal flight options, for example (Saarikomäki et al., 2018, p. 2).

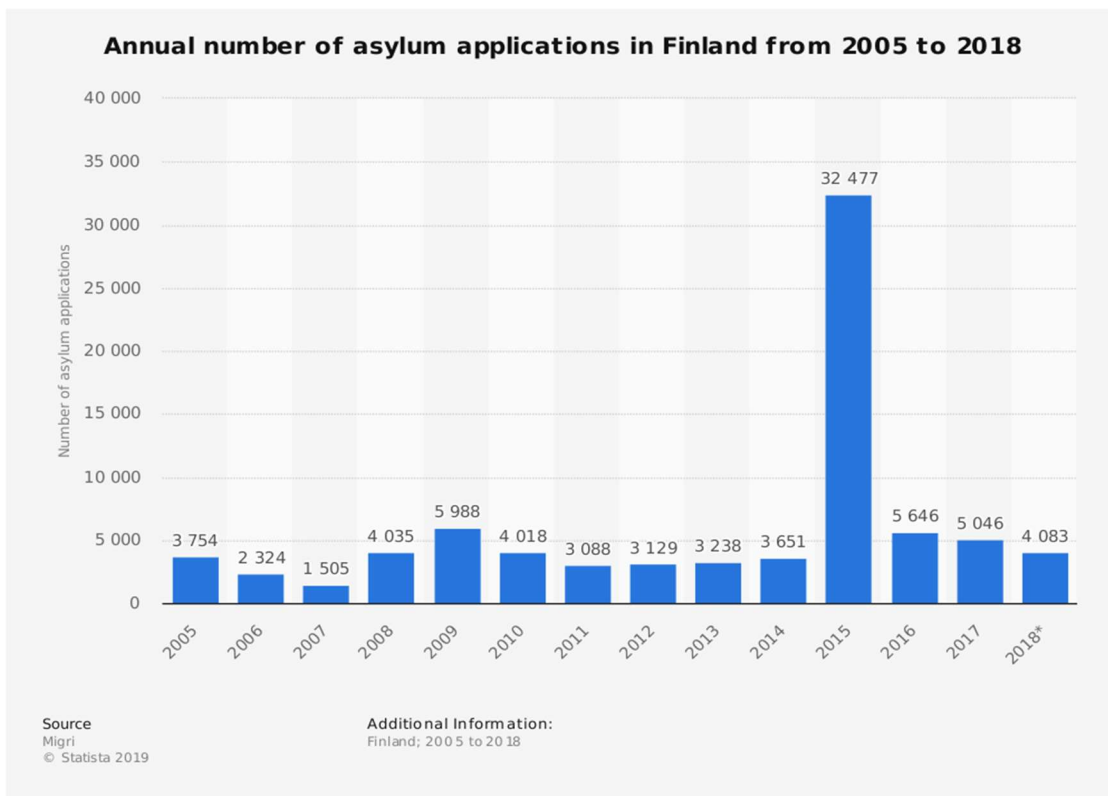


Table 1. Statista (2019) [Annual number of asylum applications in Finland from 2005 to 2018].

2.1 Refused asylum seekers and undocumented migrants in Finland

A refused asylum seeker and an undocumented migrant are closely related concepts, as a refused asylum seeker becomes undocumented if he or she does not make a subsequent asylum application or appeal. In addition, according to the Finnish Immigration Service, a refused asylum seeker is not immediately undocumented migrant after receiving the negative residence permit decision, but a person becomes undocumented if he or she does not leave the country within 30 days of the decision or apply for voluntary return support (Maahanmuuttovirasto, 2019). This thesis investigates the experiences of refused asylum seekers, and the term of a refused asylum seeker is used for individuals whose claim for asylum has been refused by the Finnish Immigration Service and who additionally may have an ongoing subsequent asylum application or appeal. An undocumented migrant is part of the group of “refused” asylum seekers.

An undocumented migrant in Finland is a person who is in the country without appropriate legal permission and whose residency is not officially accepted by the authorities of the country (Jauhiainen et al., 2018). There is concern about the growing number of undocumented people in Finland and its consequences. Several stakeholders have realized that it is in nobody's interest to have a group in this society that is illegally staying in the country as an easily exploitable and marginalized group (HDL, 2017). The Finnish authorities have terminated reception services of refused asylum seekers in Finland rapidly. The Finnish Immigration Service (2019a) has reported the amount of terminated reception services; in 2017 there were 659 people, of which 45 were underaged, and in 2018 there were 704 persons, of which 58 were underaged. The Finnish Immigration (ibid.) states:

Reception services are terminated for asylum seekers who cannot be refused entry and returned to their home country by the police, but who can return to their home country on their own initiative. Refusal of entry is not possible, for example, because of a lack of suitable traffic connections to the applicant's home country or because the applicant's home country refuses to receive persons who have been forcibly returned. The police inform the reception centre if they are unable to remove a certain person from the country. After this, the person in question has 30 days to return to his or her home country on their own initiative or apply for assisted voluntary return.

An increase in the number of undocumented migrants was expected in 2018 based on 8,500 complaints about negative asylum decisions being handled by the Administrative Court and Supreme Administrative Court in late 2017 (Jauhiainen et al., 2018, p. 23). Yle (2018) has reported that there were 11,400 asylum seekers registered in reception centers in Finland in 2018, 9,000 of whom have received a negative residence permit decision. The Faculty of Law of the University of Turku, the Human Rights Institute of Åbo Academy University and the Equality Commissioner have conducted an empirical study on changes in international protection decisions. The study indicated that the legal status of Iraqi asylum seekers (18-34 years old) under consideration seems to have deteriorated significantly from 2015 to 2017. It is noteworthy, that the deterioration cannot be explained explicitly through changes in Aliens Act. Instead, the explanatory factor is related to the tightening of the Immigration Service's line of interpretation (Saarikkomäki et al., 2018). The amount of those who have received negative decision to their asylum claim in Finland is higher than in several other Member States of the European Union. Countries that have given more positive asylum decisions in 2016 compared to Finland include countries such as: Italy, Bulgaria, Portugal and Romania (Jauhiainen et al., 2018, p. 30-31; Eurostat 2017).

The Constitution of Finland guarantees the necessary subsistence and care for undocumented migrants. Thus, the law obliges municipalities to organize, usually with the support of the state, at least urgent social and health services for the group, and help with the livelihood and housing. In November 2017, the City Council of Helsinki decided to expand the city's service offering to the undocumented (FINLEX, 1999; Jauhiainen et al., 2018). However, undocumented migrants have less access to statutory services, and they avoid interaction with statutory service providers due to fear of being identified (Bloch, 2013, p. 4). The Constitution of Finland states in the section 19:

Those who cannot obtain the means necessary for a life of dignity have the right to receive indispensable subsistence and care.

Everyone shall be guaranteed by an Act the right to basic subsistence in the event of unemployment, illness, and disability and during old age as well as at the birth of a child or the loss of a provider.

The public authorities shall guarantee for everyone, as provided in more detail by an Act, adequate social, health and medical services and promote the health of the population. Moreover, the public authorities shall support families and others responsible for providing for children so that they have the ability to ensure the wellbeing and personal development of the children.

The public authorities shall promote the right of everyone to housing and the opportunity to arrange their own housing (FINLEX, 1999).

The highest number of undocumented migrants is found in the City of Helsinki and the surrounding municipalities (Jauhiainen et. al., 2018). A state can define unauthorized residency in country, or unauthorized entry to country, as a crime and an illegal act. Irregular migration and the following unauthorized residency cannot always be regarded as a criminal act or activity; illegal immigrants are in a particularly weak and vulnerable position. People staying in the country without a residence permit or other entitlement to stay, are often staying illegally on the national territory defined by the state. The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) has divided irregular immigrants into a) who are hiding from immigration authorities or b) who cannot be removed from the country (Todorov, 2014, p. 1-2).

2.2 New paperless people

Part of refused asylum seekers who remain in Finland form a group of "new paperless people". Many of people in this group have come to Finland in 2015 during the refugee crisis. Being an undocumented migrant or "paperless" is not a new phenomenon in Finland, but this group is in a new type of situation. This is due to the following reasons: a) It is difficult for the authorities to return those who have been refused asylum, for example to Somalia or Iraq, if they themselves do not wish to return voluntarily. The reason for this is that Finland does not have a readmission agreement with these countries, and the home countries of refused asylum seekers may not receive their returning citizens. In addition, b) as a result of a change in legislation in 2015, these people will no longer receive a temporary residence in Finland. Consequently, they will end up as undocumented migrants, even though their presence is often known to the authorities (HDL 2017, p. 2).

2.2 PICUM

PICUM, the Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants, represents a network of 151 member organisations working with undocumented migrants in 32 countries (PICUM, 2018). Mission of PICUM is to be committed to ensure that undocumented migrants have a dignified standard of living and rights, their vision is to seek a world where all people have guaranteed human rights regardless of migration or residence status, and where human mobility is

recognized as a normal reality. PICUM advocates on several issues to improve the situation of migrants as such as; ending child immigration detention, reducing detention of all migrants through community-based alternatives (ibid., p. 10-11), improving conditions for migrant workers; especially in domestic and care spheres, including undocumented migrants in trade unions (ibid., p. 12-13), drawing attention to the damaging impact of certain immigration policies on migrants' physical and mental health, and advocating for a "firewall" to clearly separate access to health care from sharing of patients' data with immigration law enforcement (ibid., p. 14). PICUM also continues to collaborate with the Victim Support Europe (VSE) to improve understanding of the needs of undocumented victims (ibid., p. 18).

3 Previous research

This chapter firstly presents the international literature related to the research of which several studies have been done in the UK. The following section summarizes some of Finnish research and literature. According to Jauhiainen et al. (2018) there has been undocumented migrants in Finland for decades, but the number has been small; the phenomenon has been on the margins of the society. Related literature has recently begun to be published. Research is more abundant abroad as undocumented people have long been recognized phenomenon in many countries. Finally, a summary of the relevant literature is presented at the end of this chapter.

3.1 International research

Crawley, Hemmings and Price (2011) have done a research about survival and livelihood strategies of refused asylum seekers living in the UK. Two important factors about destitution according to the study were a) existing evidence suggests that refused asylum seekers are prepared to face long periods of destitution in the UK rather than returning to their country of origin and b) the need to remain hidden and to avoid any risk of being deported affects every decision made by destitute asylum seekers, and in turn the coping strategies which they adopt. The study has separated findings into institutional, social and economic resources; the research utilized sustainable livelihoods framework. The main findings of the study were: Firstly, social contacts and networks are often the most important resource for refused asylum seekers have in their disposal. Secondly, the group has an universal fear of interaction with the state and its representatives. Thirdly, economic resources are only available for those who are willing to work illegally; and even those working illegally and coping economically live with a chronic stress, caused by fear of deportation and lack of security for the future. All participants in this research were surviving rather than achieving a sustainable livelihood. According to Blitz and Otero-Iglesias (2011), in their study concerning refused asylum seekers in the UK, denial of the means of subsistence of refused asylum seekers is both inhumane and ineffective. Receiving a negative residence permit decision had a profound impact on the quality of people's lives. The denial of the right to work or enter education, cancellation of benefits and all the other impacts lead to increased anxiety. Some of the participants lost their access to vocational training, and that led them into new situation of idleness. Some of the male respondents in the study described that their lack of formal identity drew them into a world of crime, and one research participant had been physically abused, but recognised that as an illegal migrant, he could not pursue his attackers in court. The study calls into question the application of the basic human rights as they relate to refused asylum seekers. According to the study of Blitz and Otero-Iglesias (2011, p. 670) especially violated are dignity, non-discrimination, and the right to family life of refused asylum seekers in Britain.

Björnberg (2010) has performed a research about social relationships and trust in asylum seeker families in Sweden. The research uses in the analysis the theoretical concepts of resilience, social capital, trust and social recognition. Regarding social recognition, the study revealed that schools and other institutions such as churches, voluntary organisations, and health care institutions have an important part in creating the social recognition and positive trust for children and the parents. On the other hand, the meeting with the Migration Board and solicitors are considered as creating mistrust and negative social recognition. The relative poverty that children experience in the families brings a sense of exclusion. Parents express little interest to neighbours and even lack of trust to them, the children express similar kind of attitude. Concerning borrowing money or other material things, even from close relatives, is seen as negative and being below one's dignity and against norms (ibid.). The United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) Office on Research "Innocenti" has collaborated with the National Committees of UNICEF in Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden, and done an analysis of Nordic country responses to asylum-seeking children (Innocenti,

2018). According to the study, national child protection agencies in the Nordic region must take a more active leadership role in the lives of migrant children, since lower standards are tolerated for asylum-seeking children. Innocenti (2018) clarifies that all the actions done with children should be embedded in the CRC recommendations, it also highlight the Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families. The research also acknowledges that detention is more common in the Nordic region than it should be, stipulating that the Committee on Rights of the Child and the Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families have clarified that child detention is in any circumstances and for any period of time is a clear breach of the CRC and a serious risk to child's health, well-being and development.

Puthooppambil (2016) has performed an exploration of health of immigrant detainees in Sweden and three other EU member States. According to the research, immigration detention has negative effects on the health of detainees. The study proclaims that in order to mitigate negative health effects, the voice of detainees and detention staff should be heard and taken into consideration. Healthcare services in the detention centres were not adequate, especially concerning psychosocial support and the mental health services. ReSOMA Discussion Brief addresses current topics of the European migration and integration debate. One is the tension between interest to fight irregular migration and human rights of undocumented migrants. Vosyliūtė and Joki (2018) recognize that the sovereign state has the legitimate interest to control its borders and to know who is entering the territory of the country and fight against organized criminal groups involved in human trafficking. However, Member States are bound by different human rights documents; regional and international. Member states should respect the basic rights of everyone, irrespective of their migration background, these rights are: provision of social assistance, healthcare, access to justice and remuneration for the employment. The European Committee of Social Rights has proclaimed that the member states have positive duties which entail: providing food, emergency shelter, basic social and medical assistance for undocumented migrants (Vosyliūtė & Joki, 2018).

Bloch (2013) has focused in her paper on the everyday life experiences of rejected asylum seekers in England; their strategies and fears. She recognizes that sub-group of irregular migrants decide to stay in the country rather than taking the risk of getting deported by signing at the police station or claiming Section 4 support (i.e. Statutory Provision: vouchers to supermarkets/shops and short-term accommodation in Britain) (ibid.; Blitz & Otero Iglesias). The fear of deportation affected on the decisions of respondents about work, social networks, community and faith group participation, and the use of public and other spaces. Relations were avoided and the respondents felt isolated and being lonely; real plans and hopes for the future were contingent on the acquisition of papers. The main barrier according to Bloch (ibid.) is lack of access to work; those who were working in paid jobs, worked in co-ethnically owned businesses or within the domestic sphere. The workers get exploited, and they are working long hours, yet receiving a low pay. The participants were mostly depended on co-ethnic networks or communities and faith group organisations. Community and faith groups helped those who did not work by providing clothes and vouchers.

3.2 Finnish research

Yijälä and Nyman (2017) have done a qualitative case study of skilled asylum seekers in Finland. The study pursued to give a voice to the people themselves: interviews were done during 2015-2016 when the respondents were waiting their decisions. The aim of the study was to find out how the time spent while waiting the decision affected the acculturation process of the asylum seekers. Four distinct acculturation attitudes/strategies have been developed by Berry (1989): integration, assimilation, separation and marginalisation (Berry et al., 1989; Yijälä & Nyman, 2017). These attitudes concentrate on two issues: the degree to which people wish to maintain their heritage culture and

identity; and the degree which people seek involvement to the larger society (Berry, Phinney, Sam & Vedder, 2006, p. 306). The integration acculturation attitude is found when both cultural maintenance and involvement with the larger society are sought, and this attitude is usually the most beneficial and is related to the best adaptation outcomes across different countries and cultures (ibid; Yijälä & Nyman, 2017). In the study of Yijälä and Nyman (2017, p. 88) the participants seemed to be motivated to merge their values, customs and behaviour to fit Finnish standards, and a clear majority belonged to the integration category. This meant that the participants wanted to adopt the Finnish culture while preserving their own cultural habits. The respondents had hopes about starting a new life in Finland, at the same time they were afraid of having to return to Iraq. According to the study, the attitudes of Finns played an enormous role in the acculturation process (ibid., p. 117). Another study, written by Goda-Savolainen (2017), used the concept of acculturation as a theoretical framework. The thesis is about social support and well-being of refugees in Finland. Considering the refugees, a) not having fluency in the Finnish language made participants feel stressed and dependent on friends and interpreter, and b) being unemployed effected negatively on respondents' health; some participants felt ashamed and unworthy because they could not contribute to the society by paying taxes.

Todorov (2014) has written a thesis about the legal status of undocumented migrants residing in the country from a perspective of the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) in the University of Tampere. The aim of the thesis was to understand in what kind of legal position undocumented migrants are positioned according to ECHR. The study recognizes that undocumented migrants are in particularly vulnerable situation because they do not have the protection of the State. States also have a sovereign right under international law to pursue an immigration policy. States have tendency to prevent themselves from illegal immigration, but this causes challenges as the migratory flows into Europe are growing. States have positive obligations, which are referring to the State's obligation to engage in the activity to secure the effective enjoyment of fundamental rights (ECHR, 1953; Todorov, 2014). ECHR repeatedly emphasizes the positive obligations which States have according to Todorov (2014, p. 100). Jauhiainen, Gadd and Jokela (2018) have performed a study about undocumented migrants in Finland in 2017. The study was done to investigate who are undocumented migrants in Finland, and how much there are undocumented people living in Finland, as well as where do they live. The study estimates that there were in 2017 3,000-4,000 undocumented migrants in Finland (including "the new paperless"). Study found that most of them, hundreds, live in Helsinki, and they are seldomly found from smaller and rural municipalities. In addition, the study recognizes that the group is highly heterogeneous. According to the study the area [of undocumented migrant] is under-researched area, consequently it is difficult to monitor the development and impact of the phenomenon and to form and implement a policy based on research and facts (ibid., p. 54). Saarikkomäki et al. (2018) have investigated changes in the migration policies in the study "Decisions on international protection at the Finnish Immigration Service 2015–2017: a pilot study on Iraqi citizens aged 18-34 positive and negative decisions on the matter." The study highlights the changes in the asylum application handling between these years. The study was performed because there was not any systematic research data on the effects of tightened asylum policy" (ibid., p. 2). Many differences were observed in the application practices: applicants' reports were not considered credible, etc. According to the study, the changes observed in this study cannot be explained by changes in the applicable legislation. otherwise than by the abolition of humanitarian protection. However, humanitarian protection was applied in very few cases before the change in law (ibid., p 34).

The Helsinki Deaconess Institute (HDL, 2017) has assisted undocumented people in Finland through "The unprotected project". HDL has summarized some main findings. Three important aspects considering the undocumented were that a) social media plays an important role in the everyday life of paperless and in their decision-making, b) the group of new paperless has a major need for

counselling, service guidance and psychosocial support in their own language, and c) many of undocumented migrants have desire to get work and on that ground a residence permit (ibid., p 27). Castaneda et al. (2018) have made a PALOMA handbook concerning called “Supporting refugees’ mental health in Finland”, which is published by Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare (THL). The handbook provides guidance and guidelines on how to support and improve refugee mental health. The handbook (ibid, p. 18) recognizes that both experiences in their past lives and the conditions in Finland contribute to their wellbeing. Refugees have often been exposed to many types of violence and insecurity in their countries of origin and after leaving home, and they have lost important people in their lives, for example. In Finland, on the other hand, refugees may have been subjected to uncertainty of their right to stay in this country, various challenges related to integration and inclusion, loneliness stemming from a lack of social networks, and discrimination. The handbook addresses vulnerable groups by considering their mental health promotion, support and care (such groups as torture victims, victims of human trafficking and undocumented migrants).

3.3 Summary of relevant literature

Three studies by Crawley et al. (2011), Blitz and Otero-Iglesias (2011), and Bloch (2013) have all concentrated on the experiences of refused asylum seekers in the UK. Crawley et al (2011) highlight that social contacts and networks are often the most important resource for refused asylum seekers have in their disposal, and that the economic resources are only available for those who are willing to work illegally. Refused asylum seekers are surviving rather than achieving a sustainable livelihood in Britain. According to Blitz and Otero-Iglesias (2011), a negative residence permit decision has a profound impact on the quality of persons’ lives such as creating idleness and increased the levels of anxiety. In addition, rejection leads to criminality and abuse. Bloch (2013) describes that people live isolated lives as refused asylum seekers in Britain. They are working usually in co-ethically owned businesses or in the domestic sphere, and those who were not working were dependent on assistance from community and faith groups. In Finland, Yijälä and Nyman (2017) have done research of skilled asylum seekers, and according to the study, the participants wanted to adopt the Finnish culture while preserving their own cultural habits. This refers to the most successful integration acculturation attitude. The respondents had hopes about starting a new life in Finland, at the same time they were afraid of having to return to Iraq. According to the study, the attitudes of Finns played an enormous role in the acculturation process. Jauhiainen et al. (2018) have performed a study about undocumented migrants in Finland in 2017. The study estimates that there were in 2017 between 3,000-4,000 undocumented migrants in Finland (including “the new paperless”). Most of them lived in Helsinki, and they were seldomly found in smaller and rural municipalities, and the group is highly heterogeneous. HDL (2017) has investigated that the group of “new paperless people” in Finland has a major need for counselling, service guidance and psychosocial support in their own language, and many of undocumented migrants have desire to get work and on that ground a residence permit in Finland. These studies gave a perception and general view for the researcher on how refused asylum seekers cope in abroad and Finland and they were the foundation of this research. Especially, the study done by Crawley et al. (2011) was in many ways informative and impactful regarding this thesis. The concept of “The Sustainable Livelihoods Framework” was found from this research and later on incorporated to this thesis. The studies done in Finland provided detailed information on the issue, as in the study by Jauhiainen et al. (2018). All the studies also comprehensively highlighted the disadvantages, adversities and challenges regarding the group of refused asylum seekers.

4 Theoretical framework

Refused and undocumented asylum seekers typically face numerous and severe challenges to their psychological and physical well-being such as mental anxiety, lack of economic, social and institutional resources, illegal work, and vulnerability to exploitation/abuse, for example (Crawley et al., 2011). On the other hand, rejected asylum seekers own agency and resilience, some research refers to it as a delayed agency or agency from marginal positions. In addition, they might have defence mechanisms which can be used to survive in these challenging situations (OHCHR 2018; Ghorashi, de Boer & ten Holder, 2018). This chapter views the following theoretical concepts: social inclusion/exclusion, social capital, resilience and agency.

4.1 Social inclusion/exclusion and social capital

Social inclusion may be approached through the amount of economical and material assets or through social relationship involvement. Although much focus has been put on the work-status and economical aspects, a person can be included in ways outside of paid employment (Lister, 2000). The extent of social inclusion can also be viewed in terms of social relationships. Richard (2001) highlights that social exclusion and inclusion will impact individual's psychological functioning and social adaptation. Social exclusion from important groups is seen by Baumeister and Tice to cause anxiety for individuals, however, Lister (1990) points out that individuals do not indiscriminately seek inclusion in all groups but are selective regarding those groups in which they desire to be included. Social rejection and social exclusion are perceived differently. Social exclusion is a more encompassing phenomenon than social rejection. Social rejection typically occurs when one seeks to form and/or maintain a connection with another person, while that person refuses to get or remain involved. Rejected person has actively made an effort to connect with the other person or group, whereas with social exclusion, the excluded person is often an innocent bystander (Blackhart et al., 2010) Social relations are many times seen as a satisfier for the feeling of belonging, and they manifest in inclusion. However, the concept of social inclusion is multidimensional, and both concepts, social inclusion and social exclusion, are problematic (Korhonen & Siitonen, 2018).

Social exclusion for asylum seekers and undocumented migrants is typically present and most likely has been present in the country of origin. For the groups, exclusion translates as powerlessness and as a lack of citizenship. Lack of citizenship excludes the groups from mainstream services. Castles (2002) describes "cumulative exclusion" which refers to individuals or groups that are largely outside the mainstream economic, social and political relations, and who lack the ability to participate (Hynes, 2011). Bourdieu (1984) has considered "belonging" to some specific group is based on the preferences as a consumer, and it refers to their class, education, ethnicity, religion, generation and the places where they live in. The group in which one belongs is chosen by decisions on what kind of clothes one wears, and where the individuals wants to travel to and consequently the shared tastes derive people to desired groups. Each of the groups in this schema, have their "habitus", which refers to a set of cultural orientations (Hynes, 2011). Concerning refused asylum seekers, they rarely have access to the necessary resources, which they could use in making the mentioned choices. The choices in the lives of refused asylum seekers and undocumented migrants usually are made according to what is necessary rather than by their preference. For undocumented migrants, the social exclusion manifests as an urgency to be hidden. Blitz and Otero-Iglesias (2011) pinpoint that a refused asylum decision or being an undocumented migrant affects every individual on different levels; the effects are holistic and may extend to the identity of a person. Refused asylum seekers described feelings of isolation and psychosocial issues associated with the processes of exile and seeking asylum, and the challenges of readjusting to life after refusal.

ECRE and PICUM (2019) argue that social inclusion benefits both persons in need and society by strengthening its cohesion and resilience. Individuals cannot fulfill their full potential and contribute to society, if they are excluded. Refused asylum seekers are being marginalized on many levels. Ghorashi, de Boer & ten Holder (2018) describe that the exclusion of asylum seekers is done by exclusionary practices. Asylum seekers occupy a liminal space; they have fled their country of origin and are not accepted in the new country. Life revolves around waiting, and asylum seekers may be perceived from outside as a threatening and potentially dangerous mass.

Bourdieu, Coleman, and Putman are pioneers of the definition of social capital (Scrivens & Smith, 2013; Faucher, 2018). Bourdieu (1997) has detected economic, cultural, symbolic, and social forms of capital. These capitals are entwined and able to evolve one another; social capital does not generate itself independently of its relation to other forms of capital and obtaining one's social capital requires constant effort because it has tendency to devalue over time. Faucher (2018) describes how Bourdieu have presented the negative sides of social capital. According to Bourdieu, social capital has a little to do with open inclusion, it preserves dominance and class hierarchies while reproducing inequality. Faucher (ibid, p. 3) gives an example of the negative side; a political party's anti-immigrant message may function as a barrier to entry by those who may wish to dispute those values. In Finland, there is a strong support for the removal of undocumented migrants from the country, both politically and administratively. While NGOs and human rights organisations emphasize the unethical and problematic stigmatization of undocumented migrants, Ministry of the Interior in Finland wants the "illegal resident" term to be used instead of the term of undocumented migrant (Sisäministeriö, 2016). The discussion about undocumented migrants is controversial and challenging and has created conflicting opinions in Finland.

According to Coleman (1988), social capital is reachable by-product of social relationships, and it provides possibility for empowerment, especially concerning marginalised and disenfranchised groups. Faucher (2018) describes that Coleman illustrates social capital less conditioned by economics and class structure (vs. Bourdieu); and the emphasises that human beings are not passive beings whose agency is determined exclusively by economic capital. Coleman's ideas give a "broader" picture in this sense of social capital compared to Bourdieu. Coleman states that social capital is a resource for individuals in a network and unlike other forms of capital, it is not owned by a person but rather exists within social relationships, furthermore, social relations constitute useful forms of capital for individuals through processes such as establishing obligations, expectations and trustworthiness, creating channels for information, and setting norms backed up by efficient sanctions (Scrivens & Smith, 2013, p. 14). Putnam emphasised the meaning of civic engagement and his focus is on how social capital operates at the macro- and meso-levels of society (Scrivens & Smith, 2013). According to Faucher (2018), social capital involves trust, reciprocity, information, the possibilities for collective actions, and the transformation from the individualist identity to a community identity. ECRE and PICUM (2019) point out the central role of civic society concerning irregular migration and promote for civil society actors' access for funding in the next EU budget.

It is important to pay attention what happens in today's world online, and what kind of social assets (i.e. social capital) are existing out there. Social capital online is a product of online exchanges that can in many cases be expressed in some numeric form (likes, followers), but it may also include non-numeric forms (knowledge sharing, community building) (Faucher, 2012). This form of knowledge exchange has also been a factor on the decision making of asylum seekers, many of the asylum seekers leaned on the information in social media when deciding about in which country they seek asylum from, for example (HDL, 2017).

Social networks cannot directly be defined as social capital: networks that create social capital are reciprocal, trusting and involving positive emotion (Björnberg, 2011; Morrow, 1999). May et al. (2009) state that in a relation to the Sustainable Livelihood Framework social capital is defined as resources which people can make use of, including: informal relationships of trust, reciprocity and exchange with families, friends and neighbours, as well as more formalised groupings (e.g. community and faith groups). The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) defines social capital as: networks together with shared norms, values and understandings that facilitate co-operation within or among groups (Scrivens & Smith, p. 41). World Bank (2011) denotes that productive social capital is a part of intangible capital and highly valuable to developed countries. Social inclusion is often related to our access to resources. Resources mean in the context of this thesis available or unavailable human, social, physical, financial and public assets. These types of assets are further explained in the next chapter under the title “Planning the qualitative interviews”.

4.2 Resilience and agency

OHCHR (2018) highlights that migrants in vulnerable situations are not inherently vulnerable, nor do they lack resilience or agency, however, the vulnerability is resulted from multilateral forms of discrimination, inequality and structural and societal dynamics which lead to unequal levels of power and enjoyment of rights. Björnberg (2011) describes resilience as the individual's and family's capacity to resist adversities that they experience as harmful to their psychological well-being; it includes the availability of resources that increase their operational capacity in the environment. The term of resilience has multiple uses; it may be a description of a constellation of characteristics children have when, despite being born and raised in disadvantaged circumstances, they grow up successfully. Resilience may refer to competence when under stress, and competence dealing with threats to their well-being. In addition, resilience may have a positive function indicating a recovery from trauma. All of these definitions argue that resilience occurs in the presence of adversity (Ungar, 2016). The studies of resilience seem to concentrate on how children overcome their disadvantaged childhoods, although resilience can have a major role in the adulthood as well, especially with the refused asylum seekers and undocumented migrants all over the world. Masten and Powell (2003) present that resilience refers to patterns of positive adaptation in the context of significant risk or adversity.

Ghorashi, de Boer & ten Holder (2018, p. 385) analyse through the study narratives that asylum seekers' lack of knowledge and limited resources in the new structures limits their agency, however, their in-between state makes them more resourceful in thinking and acting outside the given structures creating for them a certain kind of agency. Chorashi et al. (201) picture “liminality” as providing duality of impossibility and possibility for action. Snellman et al. (2014) pinpoint the special features of mental health concerning asylum seekers and refugees, and highlight that people have considerable mental well-being generating resources, and coping skills managing with various mental health issues. Essential factors regarding mental well-being and planning of the effective helping practices are: the fulfilment of basic human needs, functional stress management skills, possibility to execute various identity projects, and accomplishing the sense of agency in one's own life. According to Adler (2008), the concept of agency refers to the ability and possibilities to influence one's own life. Walström (2006) argues that the sense of agency can diminish in life, as well as totally disappear (Snellman et al., 2014). To sum up, the sense of agency is a pivotal for the whole well-being and identity of refused asylum seekers. Crawley et al. (2011) mention how they interpret agency; agency is seen as an important part of coping and as the ability to influence, but it cannot be gained out of the context, and this is when the reachability to assets is essential.

It [the sustainable livelihood framework] encourages a focus on the active agency of individuals: their ability to shape and influence their lives and environments and how

they pursue a range of livelihood strategies to access resources, often in the face of numerous problems. This does not mean that agency can always be freely exerted or that asylum seekers have the power to exert control over their futures. A major influence on people's choice of livelihood strategies is their access to assets, and the policies, institutions and processes that affect their ability to use these assets to achieve positive livelihood outcomes (Crawley et al. 2011, p. 11).

According to Ahonen & Kallius (2019), the primacy of undocumented migrants' agency is sometimes emphasized; research can emphasize the ability, resilience, endurance, hopefulness, for example. However, the glorification nor the victimization narratives are sustainable from the perspective of research quality. An undocumented migrant also has roles, identities, and social belonging categories other than being undocumented. Therefore, too tightly framing the research subject may result in a one-sided and incorrect picture of the subject. Undocumented people actively belong to Finnish society, and thus their voice, for example during demonstrations, is essential to listen to (Bauder 2016).

5 Methodology

This chapter will present the design of the study, information on finding the relevant literature, and the process of data collection, which includes: sampling, planning the interviews and the process of conducting the interviews. In addition, data analysis, ethical considerations, validity and reliability of the study, and the reflection of the researcher are described in this chapter.

5.1. Design of the study

The focus of the study is to understand experiences of refused asylum seekers, thus the qualitative research methods are used in the thesis. The epistemological ground of the research is connected to interpretivism, especially to the intellectual tradition described as phenomenology. Phenomenology is one of the main intellectual traditions responsible for anti-positivist position. The phenomenology philosophy is concerned with the question of how individuals perceive the world around them (Bryman, 2012). This thesis gravitates to the individual understandings of the world and highly to their interpretations of the world. Phenomenology emphasizes freedom from assumptions and expectations and is interested in the cognitive reality, which is situated in individual experiences, but acknowledges that much of the world view has been gained from others. When describing the community level, phenomenology assumes that the worldview and experiences of the community under study are parallel. Phenomenology assumes that human thinking is a conscious and active process, and action is assumed to be intentional (Grönfors, 2011).

5.2 Finding relevant literature

Relevant literature has been sought from the beginning of the research to the end. Throughout the research process, the researcher has had to be aware of the upcoming material, since new research, literature and articles continue to emerge. The study uses the latest research on the subject. Several studies, reports and articles have been used as sources, detailed information can be found in the literature section. The most common data base used was "Gothenburg Library Search". Also, the "Sociology Collection" and "Google Scholar", were in use. The following search terms were used, among others:

Undocumented AND asylum seeker
Undocumented AND Illegal migrants AND Europe
Undocumented AND Europe
Refused Asylum seekers AND Europe AND research
Vulnerability AND refused asylum seekers

The bibliographies of relevant research reports and various articles have been used extensively, also organizations' web pages have been utilized. Both English and Finnish sources have been used in the thesis. In addition, relevant covenants and conventions by the United Nations, and Finnish legislation have been referred to.

5.3 Data collection

5.3.1 Sampling

From the beginning of the research planning process, the idea was to get in contact with the refused asylum seekers themselves; in this way, it was ensured that the sample was authentic as possible and no "middlemen" were involved. To achieve this, the researcher had to get involved with the field work and get to know the service actors, which provide support for undocumented migrants in the

Helsinki area (these actors are from the third sector, and municipalities mainly provide only assistance for subsistence). The first step was to reach an organisation called the Helsinki Deaconess Institute (HDL), which has been an active stakeholder concerning undocumented migrants in Finland. The other place reached was called “Mosaic Day Centre” (Helsingin monikulttuurinen päiväkeskus Mosaiikki). This place is held by several stakeholder: the Finnish Red Cross, the Parish Union of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Helsinki and the Finnish Blue Ribbon (The Finnish Red Cross, 2018). These are all important stakeholders in providing help for the undocumented in the Helsinki area and, for example, HDL (2017) gives, in addition, reports and suggestions to the Finnish decision-makers concerning undocumented migrants.

The researcher wanted variation in the sample, so that the experiences would be as heterogenic as possible; differences in the country of origin, state of the asylum process, and the gender. The field work took even more time for this reason, and gathering the interviews was not linear. A lot of background work had to be done. Crawley et al. (2011) point out that numerous challenges are faced when undertaking research with destitute asylum seekers because these people may be reluctant to work with any officials, including researchers from universities. The profiles of the interviewees are not described in highly detailed manner because of the high respect for confidentiality. These are the details about the interviewees which will be presented:

- a) Five of the interviewees were men and one was a woman, six in total.
- b) All the interviewees were under 50 years of age (but over 18 years of age).
- c) All the respondent came to Finland between the years of 2015-2017.
- d) The respondents were from four different nationalities.
- e) Educational backgrounds varied from having no schooling at all, to having a university certificate from the home country.

The interviewees are referred to as R1-R6. These refer to the word "Respondent 1" and so on.

5.3.2 Planning the qualitative interviews

The interview guide is found attached to this thesis (Appendix 3). The interview questions about resources are divided to five different types, and in the design of these the sustainable livelihoods approach was utilized (May, Brown, Cooper & Brill, 2009, p. 33). However, the questions used in this study have been tailored to the target group. The research of Crawley et al. (2011) “Coping with destitution – Survival and Livelihood Strategies of Refused Asylum seekers living in the UK” explores strategies adopted by destitute asylum seekers, and the results have been analysed within a sustainable livelihoods framework, that is why the framework was considered applicable in this thesis. The sustainable livelihoods framework is a holistic framework. The framework adopts a distinctive perspective on the understanding of social phenomena and how to intervene to improve the conditions of people. This framework does not concentrate on deprivation, instead on assets, which is a strength of the model; the approach tends to see people more as agents of change than passive and vulnerable people “in need” (May et al., 2009). The approach has been developed by organisations working in the global South. In the rural communities, the assets were considered as natural assets like soil, the weather, livestock and crops, for example. In developing countries people rely on these assets but in the UK these assets had to be reframed. In the UK model was redesigned in the way that public assets replaced the natural assets (ibid.).

The approach divides assets into five different groups; human, social, physical, financial and public. Human assets are describing those assets that people have “in themselves”; as the skills, knowledge, good health and ability to work. Social assets which can be named as social capital, and the concept is more carefully explained in the theoretical framework. The concept of social capital is widely used

in the studies of migration (Jill et al., 2018). Physical assets can be described more as assets “outside of ourselves” such as housing, transportation and access to information. Financial assets are earned incomes, state welfare benefits etc. Public assets are the service providers, as NGOs, all public services, as better expressed “people’s general engagement within their community beyond the immediate circle of friends and family” (May et al., 2009, p. 10).

The earlier literature and other knowledge were utilized in the planning of questions about coping strategies. The common adversities of the group detected helped to design the questions. However, questions were open, and there was no any particular formula utilized in this section. The usual adversities that refused asylum seekers experiences are in connection with psychological well-being (a constant fear of being deported), and economic difficulties (lack of access to work) (e.g. Crawley et al., 2011; Bloch, 2013). In addition, refused asylum seekers are prone to abuse, especially women (Crawley et al., 2011); that is why it was asked if the person has done something in order to gain money, that they would not otherwise do. The study by Crawley et al. (2011) present some coping strategies which refused asylum seekers use in Britain. According to the study, mobilising social relationships and networks are relied heavily upon in the absence of institutional resources. However, accommodation offered by a friend, for example, is usually not a long-term solution, and eventually tensions can arise between the provider of accommodation and a refused asylum seeker. There are potential risks in relying to social networks, people can end up in coercive or violent relationships, which are hold on because of desperation. Practising illegal work was also a coping strategy found in the study, and it was seen creating a relatively sustainable livelihood, however people practising illegal work lack rights and status, and are vulnerable to exploitation and abuse. Coping strategies of refused asylum seekers are not supporting sustainable livelihood (ibid.). According to May et al. (2009), people draw on different assets to build a livelihood strategy, and this strategy enables them to manage and sustain their lives. People who have a lot of assets, have stronger strategies and several “back-up” plans in store. The target group in this research has a lack of resources, that is why they have limited ways to cope.

It has been recognized in several studies that refused asylum seekers will stay in the country even if their asylum claim has not been successful, because they consider this option as better than returning to the country of origin, in addition, the overarching fear of deportation is also acknowledged in the studies (e.g. Crawley et al., 2011; Bloch, 2013; HDL, 2017). Refused asylum seekers are usually unable to make plans for the future, since their legal status restrains them from accessing the needed resources (Crawley et al., 2011). The questions of future were planned to be quite open and general; including question about fears and dreams considering the future. In addition, it was asked if the person was prepared to return to his or her home country, and what are his or her feelings about deportation. Jauhiainen et al. (2018) point out that undocumented migrants in Finland are left silent in the discussion of themselves. Interactive dialogue between the undocumented migrants and Finnish society actors is needed, and undocumented migrants should be represented in the decision-making. This study recognizes the expertise the interviewees have, and that is why their experiences of the asylum process and feedback to Finnish decision-makers is taken account and related questions are attached to the interview guide.

5.3.3 Conducting the interviews

The qualitative interviews were carried out with six participants individually. Most of the interviews were done with an interpreter (four out of six). One of the interviewees was conducted in Finnish, the rest in English. The persons who occupied as translators in this study, worked with the respondents in the organisations, and were aware of the issues of confidentiality. In one case, a friend of an interviewee translated the interview since this was the wish of the participant. In addition, the interpreters were already known to the interviewees, which may have created this situation to be more

secure and comfortable for the participants (the interpreters in the study also asked the participants to join the interviewees). Noteworthy is that the interpreters were not professional translators. They consisted of workers and one volunteer of an organization working with undocumented migrants. Official interpreters were not available for this study, but the cooperation worked well with the available translators.

Semi-structured interviews were used as a data collection method. The interview is probably the most commonly employed method in qualitative research. The two most commonly used types of interviewing styles in qualitative method are the unstructured and semi-structured interviews. If the researcher is using semi-structures interviews, she or he uses a list of questions or quite specific topics that will be covered. These lists are referred to as interview guides; the interviewee still has a great leeway to use when answering to the questions. Unstructured interviews tend to be very similar to a conversation (Bryman 2012). By using the semi-structured interview method in this study, the researcher gave the interviewees the freedom to elaborate their reflections, while still trying to go through the specific topics. The researcher did not try to guide the interviews; in some occasions the interviewer had to ask follow-up questions, if the answer was considered too vague. In these situations, the goal was to get more accurate answer but not guide the answer to some specific direction.

The interviews lasted approximately 40 minutes, in some occasions more, and some less. Interviews were held at a location which was convenient and suitable for the both parties. Three of the interviews were conducted at private rooms in the two different day centres for undocumented migrants in the Helsinki area. Two interviews were done in the library in a private room. One interview was done in a multicultural evening at church premises. The interviews were recorded by a mobile telephone and transcribed by computer shortly after.

5.4 Data analysis

The recorded material was transcribed; the interviewees were generally transcribed from the start to finish, but some repetitive and non-relevant words were left out. The data was analysed by using thematic analysis method. Thematic analysis is widely used, but there is not any agreement about what thematic analysis is. It is a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns also described as "themes" within data (Braun & Clarke 2016, p. 6). When searching for themes, the researcher needs to try to focus on repetitions, because by acknowledging them, at first researcher establishes a pattern and then a theme (Bryman 2012, p. 580-582). A theme captures something important of the data in relation to the research question (Braun & Clarke 2016, p. 11). For establishing the themes, the data had to be went through several times. The researcher used highlighter pens with different colours to spot quotes that might belong to the same "themes". Gradually the following themes were established.

Resources / Assets				
Human	Social	Physical	Financial	Public

Coping Strategies			
Building Social Networks	Working	The Grey Market	Other Mechanisms

The Ideas About the Future		
Residence & Relocation	Fears	Hopes & Dreams

Experiences of the Asylum Process and the Feedback to Decision Makers	
The Experiences	The Feedback

Table 2. The Emerged Themes and Subthemes.

In the study, mostly the inductive stance was applied, in which theory is the outcome of research. This means that the researcher has made generalizable conclusions out of the observations. However, the inductive process often includes an element of deduction; in this study a sustainable livelihoods framework has been applied in the analysis concerning the resources (Bryman, 2012).

5.5 Ethical considerations

Several ethical considerations had to be acknowledged during the thesis process. Firstly, the target group, refused asylum seekers, is a highly marginalized and a vulnerable group in the Finnish society. Sometimes asylum seekers and irregular migrants are referred as “the most excluded, disempowered, disenfranchised populations in the world” (Wilding 2009; Korhonen & et al, 2018, p. 183). Performing the research concerning the experiences of this group required cultural sensitivity and cultural competence. Cultural competence refers to respecting people from different cultural backgrounds and fostering an atmosphere of non-discrimination in society. On a practical level among professionals it means obtaining cultural awareness, and related knowledge and skills. Cultural sensitivity is tied up to the concept of the competence, and it refers to discreet verbal and non-verbal interpersonal skills and showing sensitivity in the encounters of people. It also includes the willingness to know about another cultures (THL, 2019). In this research respectfulness and discretion was considered at all stages. The interviewee's expertise was emphasized in the beginning of each interview. It was suggested that the respondent can speak as openly as she or he wants to and can ask questions at any point.

Secondly, there should not appear any harm for the interviewees from participating to the research. Harm can be done in relation to a study by causing stress for participants, and it can affect participants' self-esteem (Bryman, 2012). The possible harmful effects of the study were eliminated as far as possible by taking steps to ensure the participants knew their rights and duties concerning the research. The research plan was written carefully, and the plan was given to the supervisor of the thesis, who gave the ethical consent at first. After this the application was sent to Ethics Committee of the Helsinki Deaconess Institute (HDL) with required documents. HDL was the first organization

asked to cooperate with the research. Interviewees' live in a cumbersome situation, and that was also acknowledged in the beginning of the interview by interviewer saying that she knows that the respondent has a complicated situation. In addition, interviewer introduced herself, there were no intention to create situation where the student performing the interview would be in a total control, or in a more powerful position; from the beginning the expertise of the participant was highlighted. "Information on research" was an informative document which was handed out to the participants, usually before the interview, so they had time to read it. Because the text was in English, it was interpreted also before performing the interview. It included information about the aims and purpose, research progress, benefits of the research, confidentiality, volunteering and the research results. Everything was presented clearly, and participants were aware that they are volunteering to the research and they could withdraw their consent at any given time, even after the interview. They were aware that they might not benefit from the participation directly, but their input may help to convey information about refused asylum seekers in Finland for a wider audience.

Thirdly, it is important to consider the confidentiality of records. This means that the identities and records of individual will be maintained as confidential and anonymous (Bryman, 2012). In the process of the thesis, this aspect has been fully considered. The study does not give any specific information about the respondents. The home countries are not listed, and the accurate ages of the persons are kept private, for example. The previous or current reception centres, in which the respondents have been or are registered, are not mentioned either, although the respondents have told about those in the interviews. This sort of information is not released, because such a revealing information can lead to a situation in where they can be recognized. In addition, if the researcher felt that something confidential was said by the interviewee, it has been kept away from the published material. Overall, the most important key factors and narratives are used as analysed data, although much of the material may be for sensitive persons "distracting". These narratives can include desperate coping strategies, desolation and frustration towards the current circumstances of life. No one from the participants should be recognized. When the researcher has prepared the transcripts, names were never put on the same papers that no one could combine name and the interviewed material. Never a name and a recorded material was combined either. These aspects are extremely important in the study, because the interviewees may be afraid of deportation or have some other reasons to be afraid of harmful consequences.

Finally, in an ethical research it is important to take care of informed consent. In voluntary inquiries, the requested volunteers should not be under the impression that they are required to participate. Research participants should be given as much information as might be needed to make an informed decision about whether they wish to participate in a research (Bryman, 2012). In this thesis, it was made sure that the participants understood what is asked from them and they knew they could refuse to participate in the study at any point (information on research and informed consent are attached). All interviewees signed, except one gave a verbal consent, a document called "Informed consent". This also was read with an interpreter.

5.6 Validity and reliability

External reliability means according to Bryman (2012), the degree to which study can be replicated. The reliability of the results may be confirmed by similar results from existing studies. High level of congruence was with the studies performed by Crawley et al. (2011), HDL (2017) and Yijälä and Nyman (2017), for example. Therefore, it is likely that similar results will outcome from the following researches. The validity of this thesis is demonstrated by describing all the stages of making the research and the methods which were used. The study is explained as in detail as possible, and it aims to be as transparent as possible. Validity is defined by the similarity of the study description to the actual study situations, i.e. the validity is the accurate ratio of the field situation and the research

report. Empirical research combines the values and behaviours of the researcher and the participants. A researcher's values and behaviour are influenced by his or her education, scientific, philosophical and political background, personality and many other personal and organizational backgrounds. These issues influence the way the researcher views the empirical world of the subjects. The research should describe how the researcher relates to the world of the subjects (Grönfors, 2011). In the following chapter, the researcher's role, reflections and the background are analysed in the study.

The strength of the work is that the target group itself has been listened to in this study. It is typical to interview some groups which works with target group, social workers or other people. In this study, the interviewees are directly encountered, and the information is obtained from themselves, so the information has not changed along the way. The strength of the work is its diverse backgrounds of the interviewees; the interviewed group is heterogeneous, individuals come from multiple countries, and are from different age groups, for example. The weakness of the work can be that it focuses on many things, so it has not been possible to show in-depth coverage of the issues investigated.

5.7 Reflections of the researcher

I have previously worked with asylum seekers from different cultural backgrounds in Finland before starting my master's programme at the University of Gothenburg. I had achieved some needed knowledge, skills and cultural awareness from my former working experience. I worked with different groups of asylum seekers; I started working with adults, including families, and afterwards I worked with unaccompanied minors. I had possibility to follow the situation of the refugee crises quite closely in Finland and witnessed the downsides and precariousness of the people in these situations, and the interest to make the thesis of the issue was due to my experiences from the field. It felt concern towards the situation in Finland. After spending a year and half in Sweden, I did not know how the situation was evolving around refused asylum seekers in Finland. In addition, I was not aware of the issues related to undocumented migrants in Finland. I acknowledged that the expertise lied within the respondents and the people working with them. Although, investigating the related literature helped getting a picture of the situations these people might be challenged with.

As a researcher I needed to practice as much as neutrality and objectivity as possible throughout the whole research process. Total objectivity is not possible - it is impossible for anyone to disassociate themselves and completely exclude their own thinking. However, researcher needs to actively seek to be aware of his or her own attitudes and beliefs, so that they do not overly influence the research (Saaranen-Kauppinen & Puusniekka, 2006). Objectivity was considered, and nothing was assumed from the participants in this study. As a researcher, I wanted to reach as realistic picture as possible of the experiences of the target group, that I did mostly by creating a safe environment for people to talk. I did tell the respondents, that I am a university student and investigating the experiences of refused asylum seekers. Respondents clearly saw that I am a Finn and belong to the majority of population. This may have influenced the interviewees to be cautious. One issue that might have helped in creating a best possible environment for the interview, was that I used time, not only for performing the interviews, but doing field work by visiting the day centres for undocumented migrants. This way I got to know the participants better. In addition, I was networking with the staff, and the volunteers in the organisations. I gained interviewees by cooperating with the staff members and volunteers of the organizations.

6 Findings and analysis

In this chapter the results will be analysed and discussed by using the theoretical framework and the literature presented in the earlier chapters. In the analysis the main goal is to give answers to the following research question:

1. How do the refused asylum seekers describe their resources?
2. How do the refused asylum seekers describe their coping strategies?
3. How do the refused asylum seekers perceive their future?
4. How do the refused asylum seekers describe experiences in the asylum process, and what are their messages to the Finnish decision-makers?

6.1 Resources

According to the sustainable livelihoods approach, the resources of the participants are divided into: human, social, physical, financial, and public assets (May, Brown, Cooper & Brill, 2009). Human assets are further divided to the sections of knowledge and health. In the analysis, the terms "respondent" and "interviewee" were used interchangeably

6.1.1 Human assets

Knowledge

The interviewees came from different educational backgrounds, from not having any formal education to obtaining a university degree. Two of the respondents felt that they had benefited from the earlier working experiences to this point; the experience of driving had helped one getting a job in Finland; one found a work from the construction field due to his working history. There was an interviewee who had no experience except finishing the elementary education, but still had found work in Finland from a place where no former work experience nor occupational education was necessary.

Yeah, kind of [asked if the former work experience has helped in Finland]. Just for driving, now I got the permanent [contract of employment] because I'm driving also in this company. (R5)

He said you have a lot of experience here, you're doing good, working. [...] I start working so hard. (R4)

The former knowledge did not seem to be in a substantial role at this state but had an effect, because education gained in the respondent's home country is not easily convertible or equivalent to degrees in Finland. The reason why knowledge was considered as an important aspect in this study, is that the gained knowledge, which can be in a form of language skills, vocational training, or educational achievements, can form asset which help coping in a new society (Crawley et al., 2011).

I work in Iraq officer – police. I end my university police. Like certificate police. (R1)

I haven't been in school in my country at the time, for short time, because my family, they obligated me to leave the school and go to marry. (R6)

Health

The respondents possessed symptoms that impaired their mental health such as stress, desire to die, and frustration, the most common of them was stress. The experiences of stress were generally intense and due to serious mental distress. For one interviewee, the disappointment after receiving the third

negative answer to the asylum claim, led to a suicide attempt, which was prevented by friends who knew his location. Stress was constant and had its effects; one interviewee said that he is afraid of everything. One respondent described how he sometimes hopes to die while sleeping and remarked during the interview that other people would be broken in his situation.

It is not good at all [mental health]. Because when I got the negative decisions, I've forgotten myself completely. I was even like tried to kill myself and I was bad psychological [...] But now I'm starting to take care of myself. (R5)

Physically I feel okay, but mentally I have some problems like stress, I'm nervous always and worried about my situation. [---] I can't sleep well. I am nervous, and I am always afraid of everything. This kind of problems and feelings bothering me a lot, I am suffering of this situation. (R2)

I can't say how feeling, I think I want to die sometimes, because I have to wait also again one year and half, and I don't know what I get in the future, residence, negative, or something. (R1)

One respondent, who was undocumented and living without any subsistence (i.e. destitute), described feeling as “destroyed”. Feelings of depression and hopelessness were due to the indistinct situation concerning the residence; there was a clear congruence between the ambiguity about the residence and mental distress based on this study. The current situation in the asylum process and former experiences in the country of origin influence together on asylum seekers' mental well-being (Snellman et al., 2014).

Under zero my health. My health situation, my psychological situation, it's so destroyed. [...] Sometimes I think I get crazy. [...] Even I'm so strong woman, but what I have experienced in life have made me getting crazy sometimes. (R6)

Interviewees were physically generally in good physical shape. This can be considered as an asset and a protective factor, as it can help to get employed, for example. The National Institute for Health and Welfare (2018) have stated that asylum seekers are relatively young and healthy; this can be considered as a resource that promotes and maintains health and well-being., in addition, asylum seekers were motivated to build new lives for themselves, and they felt able and willing to work. This factor brought also frustration for the refused asylum seekers, because when they get their final negative decision, they were not entitled to work in Finland. There seemed to be according to this study several hindrances in gaining residence through employment.

Frustration. I'm disappointed. I want to support my children financially, mentally. Then it seems like I have nothing. Dad can't do anything. It is terrible for self-esteem. (R3)

6.1.2 Social assets (Social capital)

In this study, the terms of “social assets” and “social capital” are used interchangeably. Social assets were usually quite narrow, but the acquired social connections had a highly valuable meaning to refused asylum seekers because of the limited or non-existent support from the government. As the social capital is intangible, and has no apparent quantifiable measure (World Bank, 2011; Faucher, 2018), it is challenging to detect how much each respondent owned social assets, however, the amount of social capital seemed to vary depending on mainly on the legal status and personal characteristics. Family relations were non-existent or vague because of the geographical distance, or for other reasons, which resulted in not gaining the social assets from any relatives. Some other things as a

challenging situation in the home country inflicted the relations; an interviewee could not talk about their personal challenges to the family members who were suffering in the home country. This may result as a non-reciprocal relationship. Family relations could have been also intentionally vague because the person did not want to be in connection with his or her family.

Never I told my family it's bad. Because they are, every time they are bad. Life like there's really bad. (R4)

No, I don't have anything ever, I left my home country since 2001, and all my family there, I left everything. I experienced so hard and difficult life since that time [...] And Finland is now the last country. (R6)

Relations considered as social capital should be reciprocal, trusting and including positive emotions (Björnberg, 2011; Morrow, 1999). Interviews revealed that typically fellow countrymen, for the male participants, brought most of the social assets. Except, one interviewee, due to his ideology, was not for the most part in touch with his compatriots. In turn, he had become close with some local people. He described that his former social worker helped him to get in touch with a family, who accommodated him, and currently he saw this family like his own. According Yijälä and Nyman (2017), some skilled asylum seekers reported being atheist in their study, and that their personal values were more in line with the Finnish ones than those which were prevalent in their own home country.

Actually, friends have been helping me, because I'm a bit open socially and friendly. Because most of friends have been helping me like how to find jobs, and how to find school, how to find apartments. All my Finnish friends have been helping with that. [...] Most of friends are Finnish or Swedish. (R5)

Having one's own family in Finland can help in the integration to the new society, but it can also create pressure to succeed in a mission to provide for the family. One interviewee was a father, and he stated that he has waited four years, and nothing had happened. People can feel stuck and unable to do things; this leads to having a loss of agency. The father felt as failing in his duty to provide for the family. Snellman et al. (2014) describe the lack of agency as a situation in which life involves a constant struggle to control the situation, and the abilities, resources, and circumstances do not enable positive changes and improvements to happen.

My children have also asked "Dad, when will we go on a cruise?" Then I feel disappointed, I cannot go anywhere with the kids. (R3)

6.1.3 Physical assets

Initially, the respondents had been living in reception centres in Finland; except one person, who had moved with his wife and children who lived permanently in Finland. Three of the respondents described been living in four different centres, thus the experiences of living in several centres were common. There exists an embedded condition as being on threshold or in-between structures, while living in the reception centres (Ghorashi, de Boer & ten Holder, 2018). The least access to physical assets was owned by a respondent who was undocumented and destitute. She was only clinging on some support from other persons from her social networks, in addition, she had been visiting some NGOs, but these could not currently provide any tangible support for her. Being an undocumented migrant restricts connections with any institutions. In order to stay in the country people in such circumstances go deep underground to avoid being in touch with any institutions or officials (Crawley et al., 2011). Bloch (2013) states that in her study the fear of deportation affected on the decisions of

respondents about work, social networks, community and faith group participation, as well as the use of public and other spaces.

I live now at this moment with some friend, which is [...] women, I met her before reception centre. [...] Because my reception centre services were stopped because the process ended, and I was kicked out of reception centre without any services. So, at that time it was so hard difficult situation, because me as a woman, I am at the streets, I am without any services. (R6)

Crawley et al. (2011) discuss in their research about the transactional element in the relationships between undocumented migrants and local people, which can lead to exploitative relationships. The destitute person may have to offer services like childcare, cooking, housework or sometimes even sex, for meals, small amounts of cash, shelter and other daily necessities. It was common that the vulnerability and lack of access to services is being exploited in the UK (ibid). In this study, the respondent who was a woman, described being sexually exploited by a local person, who had been giving her false promises of marriage.

I know this guy through my friend, as we agreed to go to marry and to live together. And according to this agreement at that time, we agreed to be married officially, also to register our relationship in the Maistraatti [the registry office]. [...] Also, a part of the agreement was, he said that I could live in the place, which was his place. He could be with someone else, and until we get all of this certificate and official papers for our marriage. And after that we can be like a normal couple, so but he denied this agreement. He lied to me, and he came to me at night and obligated me to having sex with him. (R6)

An accommodation for an individual is necessity in order to have some standard of security and sustainability in life; sleeping rough on the streets will have prompt adverse consequences due to the Finnish weather, especially in winter. One of the respondents found it impossible to live in his former reception centre, because he experienced discrimination while living there. As a solution, he spent some nights in the airport, but this was a temporary solution, later he found a more secure place to stay.

[---] not all of them. Trying to wake me up at the middle of night, they were making noise. Who was living in my room. So that was not easy at all, or I was not comfortable at all. I was trying to find somewhere. I was sleeping four days in airport [...] I was sleeping there sometimes five or six hours. (R5)

Currently all respondents lived in private accommodations; one with his family and one with a girlfriend; nobody lived in a reception centre. The places may be changing for some respondents, since it was hard to find a permanent place to stay for them.

There is a private place from my friend who are Afghans, I live with them. [pays rent]. (R2)

I live with my friend. [pays rent] (R4)

I live with my girlfriend and with my Finnish family, with my Finnish family which I have lived with around two years. [...] I look like them like my real parents. (R5)

6.1.4 Financial assets

Two of the six interviewees earned their own income by working. In addition, one respondent had been working before but later on he was asked to resign. This was due to employer receiving a notice that this person could not work any longer because of his residence status. This person was in a difficult situation because his former salaries affected on the amount of the reception allowance, and he has been told that he will not receive for the moment any reception allowance. All the participants wished to be employed. Only one of the interviewees was receiving the reception allowance. When a person is registered in one reception centre, he or she is entitled to the reception allowance if she or he has no other income (The Finnish Immigration Service, 2019b).

I have permanent job, with one company, a cleaning company. It's around full-time. (R5)

When they got my working permit, and when I asked to get money from the camp. Now it's 15 days that they don't give me the money. And they say because you have been working, you should have saved some money and you still should have some money to spend. (R2)

One interviewee was receiving economic assistance from the Helsinki social services. One respondent was destitute, and therefore her livelihood was extremely precarious. Occasionally she loaned small amounts of money from her friends and collected empty bottles for recycling to get a deposit from them. The person did not always have even possibility to go to visit the day centre for undocumented migrants because she could not afford to buy a bus ticket there.

How could I pay to her, when I don't have any resources of money [---] And you know, according to humanitarian reasons, she offered me to live with her [asked does the respondent pay rent] [---] just I'm collecting some empty bottles and exchange to have some few money. Or might be that I borrowed money from my friends 10 euros, 5 euros, not more, but there are no resources. (R6)

When I get like social Kalasatama [the social services situated in Helsinki] money, and this money for food, I give small money from this, to this guy and I can stay with him in home. [...] when I give this money. In the future I don't know, maybe I do not get money, and they say "Go out" or something. (R1)

Just to spend time with other people as it is so nice place [talking about the day centre for undocumented] [...] But sometimes I couldn't come here, because I couldn't travel bus, because I don't have any card bus or any ticket. (R6)

6.1.5 Public assets

The legal status of the respondents had an effect on their access to public assets. Interviewees described what had happened after they received a negative residence permit decision.

I was paperless [an undocumented migrant] at that time, I didn't have right to work, I didn't have right to health care. I didn't have right to get any money. I was paperless. (R5)

I don't have, not anyone can help me. I have two negatives now, and no one will support me. (R1)

Generally, there seemed not to be enough public assets, especially when it came to mental health services; the demand is greater than the supply. One interviewee said that he had not received any public services (e.g. services held by NGOs) except for those offered in the reception centre. One respondent described the lack of access in the health services even while being registered at the reception centre.

Never [interviewer was asked about receiving health services]. Because before I had pain in my teeth, they cancelled all the appointment with the doctor. [...] I took the tooth off by myself [...] because three nights I can't sleep. (R4)

The services generated by the reception centres were pivotal to the interviewees since four of the them relied on those services. Reception centres offer health services among other basic services, and adult asylum seekers receive urgent and essential health treatment. People under 18 years of age are entitled to all public health services available (The Finnish Immigration Office, 2019b). There were several remarks about the inadequate health care services in the reception centres according to the interviews.

When I was living in the reception centres, I was always, when I had some health problem, I was asking for the reception centres a visit seeing doctor, but they use to always giving me this tablet "Burana" [ibuprofen]. (R2)

Four respondents had been visiting the NGOs for undocumented people; one said that he had been a volunteer in a day centre for undocumented. The undocumented participant described how she had not gained any concrete services from the day centre but enjoyed seeing people there. Crawley, Hemmings and Price (2011) pinpoint that: it has been confirmed in many studies that social relationships are important, not only because of the material benefit that they provide, but also because they confirm a person's worth and existence. The dependence on certain people can be, however, draining on individual relationships and friendships; it also takes its toll on the independence and personal freedom of destitute asylum seekers. The only long-term strategy for securing a sustainable livelihood is trying to access one's own economic resources. During the interview with the undocumented respondent, it came to her knowledge that she could visit Global Clinic, a medical clinic in Helsinki for undocumented migrants, which is mainly based on the voluntary work of doctors and other health care personnel. The clinic provides multi-professional help for those who do not have the right to public health care services in Finland. The care provided by the clinic is free of charge, anonymous and confidential (Global Clinic, 2019). This was a practical example of how possible access to information may have a major impact on other assets as well. As Bourdieu (1997) has acknowledged, the one's assets do not work independently, another asset can build up another one. One respondent described having received legal assistance through a day center for undocumented migrants.

I know my friend x, he told me come to "Mosaiikki" [a day centre for undocumented]. I agree with him to go "Mosaiikki" sometimes. (R4)

Partly, just when I came to this place. I sit with them, I get information to consultations to discuss, and I just sit here and drink coffee and spend some short time. I don't have this paper, day centre x couldn't provide more services. [...] At least I found the place where I could find other people, just not to get more crazy being alone. (R6)

My lawyer is not good. And now my situation, person x [a day centre worker] wants to make my case, to fix it. Person x wants to fix my case. (R1)

[...] I have been working there [the day centre for undocumented migrants] volunteer.
(R4)

6.2 Coping strategies

In order to achieve a level of mental stability and economic sustainability, different coping strategies were implemented by the interviewees. In a highly stressful situations of a refused asylum seeker, establishing, or gaining the sense of agency back, is essential for persons' well-being (Snellman et al., 2014). The following practices are the examples of how people survive in Finland with their limited resources.

6.2.1 Building social networks

Agency is in connection with social inclusion and exclusion; more we have agency, more we have potential to be included. Korhonen and Siitonen (2018) pinpoint that one's own efforts will contribute to the sense of inclusion. Building social networks is beneficial on many levels; one respondent described having a strong social network in Finland, which had helped him in several ways, and in his opinion will support him in the future. Strong social networks can also protect from the post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (Brewin, Andrews & Valentine, 2010).

But now because of, I have a Finnish family and then a girlfriend, but for other people it's really hard. But for me it's maybe a little easier, because they can apply for me, and they can like take me to emergency. Which for me, as an asylum seeker, if I'm alone. I don't feel like this place for me because I don't have a residence permit. Because when you're going there, immediately they ask for a Finnish security number which I don't have. (R5)

Crawley et al (2011) describe that the social network [assets] can be mobilised. In Finland, a social network can help eventually at gaining a residence permit. One respondent described how his friend have helped him with several issues such as: finding a job, discovering a better solicitor, coping with daily necessities, gaining a place to stay, and learning the Finnish language. The respondent described owning personal characteristics, which made it easier for him to gain friends; he described himself as open and friendly. Another interviewee said that he only asks his friends for help, and he does not seek assistance from the third sector services. Crawley et al (2011, p. 36) remark that "The ability to build and maintain a social network is a complex social skill at which some people are more competent and successful than others."

I'm not a shy person also [...] So I have a lot [of] Finnish friends and Swedish friends. Also, from work I'm getting a lot of friends, I've been working more than ten companies in Finland. I'm professional painter. [...] They were really helping me to learn Finnish.
(R5)

I don't get help from any others, only sometimes I ask my friends. (R2)

Gaining social assets through romantic relationships was not commonly seen as a method in this study. An interviewee mentioned that it is hard to find a partner since he is a refused asylum seeker, and that is why his staying in the country is precarious. One respondent had a girlfriend; the respondent acknowledged that he could even marry his girlfriend and apply a residence on the ground of marriage but was not interested in the option.

I have a girlfriend I can marry, we love each other [...]. And I have opportunity to apply work for a [residence] permit but I don't because I have a case. So, I feel I really deserve this [a refugee status]. (R5)

Interviewees generally coped by getting a place to stay through social connections. The destitute interviewee told that she has gotten some necessities from her social network. However, the people living in the same place were not usually friends but found because of the social network. One respondent had got to know a Finnish family, and they had provided the interviewee an accommodation earlier, currently he lives with a girlfriend.

It is not usually when I say friends that friend will [help], no because they already have some difficult situation. Might be some Finnish friends, like Finnish women. They help me to buy shampoo and they provide me clothes or shoes, sometimes, like this. (R6)

I live now at this moment with some friend [...] Because my reception centre services were stopped because the process ended, and I was kicked out of reception centre without any services. So, at that time it was so hard difficult situation, because me as a woman, I am at the streets, I am without any services [...] because I at that time I supposed to remove from place to place, just to find where I could sleep. [---] And you know, according to humanitarian reasons, she offered me to live with her. (R6)

Here it was not easy at all for me to live with all those Muslim people, and refugee centre. [...] Especially, when they know your ideas [...] It has been really hard for me. So, many times I suffer there in refugee centre. [...] got fighting so many times. That's why I haven't lived so much in refugee centre, and that's why this family [a Finnish family]. I have been living with them. (R5)

6.2.2 Working

Every interviewee wanted to pursue working, and two from the group were currently employed. For the interviewees, the work did not only represent a channel for income, in addition, it decreased person's stress levels, and gave a sense of meaningfulness and purpose. One interviewee was employed but had to leave the work because of the negative answer to his asylum claim. The respondents were asked if they wanted to apply a residence for an employed person from the Finnish Immigration Service; one person said that he will apply if the current asylum claim is not successful. Many of the interviewees said that it is not possible or at least easy for them to apply this kind of residence permit, since they do not have a passport with them from the country of origin, for example.

Yes, of course, I would like to start working in company x. At least when I am doing something, I feel like I am important person at least for myself, and it, working, makes me to be calm, to be out of my stress a little bit. (R2)

It's difficult for me, I don't think so [asked about can asylum be granted on the basis of employment]. (R2)

One interviewee described that he wanted to work particularly because he wanted to support his family. Earlier he had tried to get a job and started at one work place, but he was told that he cannot be accepted as an employee because he did not possess a residence permit in Finland, and due to this has neither the Finnish social security number. Another respondent pointed out as well the difficulty with not having a social security number, because it is asked in many places, and the right to services will quickly be denied without it.

I was at work, they said you can't work. Sometimes I want to be at work, make gigs as a dishwasher, as a cleaner. But they told me that I cannot work any longer. And now I'm receiving the reception allowance. I have tried to get many jobs, but they say "you do not have a residence permit, and you do not have a social security number" (R3)

6.2.3 The grey market

Half of the interviewees had experiences in illegal work; one of them had worked illegally shortly in Germany. One respondent pointed out that usually the people who most likely use illegal workforce, and exploit the situation of refused asylum seekers, are themselves originally from the Middle Eastern cultures, or from some other cultures than Finnish one. He described his experiences as following:

Before I am worker in Finland, I worked [...] in restaurant. People who get negative, Arabic or Kurdish, they use people because you have negative [...] It happened with me. They give me like sixty hours month. They don't give you more, because you can get citizen's work. They give me a paper contract, like sixty hours, but I worked more than sixty hours [...] They used me like that. (R1)

One interviewee said that he tried to look for work, after leaving the reception centre and sleeping in the airport, he went through several restaurants to ask for a job, eventually he found a place where he could start to work, in addition, they arranged a room for him. He worked illegally long hours, and did not receive much salary, but he got a roof over his head. Crawley et al. (2011) remark that although refused asylum seekers know that it is illegal for them to work, there are numerous and often cumbersome difficulties in sustaining a livelihood through solely institutional and social resources.

I should work somewhere by black. And I was working 18 hours for 20 euro and for my sleeping place, because I didn't have place to sleep. [...] From 10 o'clock morning until 4 am [...] I had to be ready before that time in the restaurant. (R5)

Nobody was currently working illegally based on the interviews. Crawley et al. (2011) faced in their study many people were involved with illegal work in the UK, although the experiences were variable, they usually worked in low-skilled jobs, with low-pay, long hours (or taking several jobs), had poor working conditions, worked during the weekends, and lived in constant fear of being raided by immigration officials. According to Himanen (2012) being an undocumented migrant involves the risk of being a victim of trafficking or working in conditions which resemble slavery.

6.2.4 Alcohol

Most of the interviewees had used alcohol to decrease their stress. One interviewee said that when he got his first final negative decision, he spent all his money for alcohol. Generally, the respondents used alcohol to forget the difficult situations in which they lived in, and the drinking was only a temporary solution to the distress, and it did not provide any long-term solutions. One respondent said that he felt bad after drinking, however, drinking seemed to give the interviewees a temporary relief.

It happens very rarely to go through alcohol [...] to get rid of the stress. Only when I'm really, my emotional feeling is destroyed and I have no way to fulfil my fears, then something comes to my mind, to do something. But later I think I shouldn't do it. (R2)

Sometimes I have to go to drink, to help my heart. Because I want to forget sometimes. (R4)

I spent all my money, which I collected for drinking. I was in a really bad life [situation] when I got two negatives. (R5)

6.2.5 Other mechanisms

Doing sports was a common way to alleviate stress; respondents felt that by doing things, they coped with the faced adversities. The respondent who was undocumented and destitute, told that she spent a lot of time in a one place; listened to music and played with a friend's children. Two of the respondents did not prefer drinking as a coping method. One respondent felt that he is 'strong' and able to cope without alcohol by concentrating on exercising. Another interviewee felt that his religion, Islam, helped him to cope with his frustration, by giving the needed mental support.

I try to do as much as possible I could. So, if I could go to drink something, okay. Or I try to play with the kids. Or try to read something or try to listen the music or, still lying in the bed. Two or three months in the place, I couldn't leave. [---] (R6)

I am a strong man, I don't drink alcohol or [...] I can stay strong and not like hurt myself. [...] Every day I go to do sport, because everything negative gets out. (R1)

Yeah, sometimes I go to like exercise. [...] Like push-ups or go jump or something. (R4)

It feels in my mind to be undocumented, but my religion is Islam. I believe that everything comes from God. My religion supports me. [...] When I came to Finland, I was happy. You can support your kids, get to work, study [...] It has taken for many years, shortly four years, there is nothing. I didn't do anything for the kids, I didn't do anything for myself. (R3)

6.2.6 Asking for help

Repeatedly in the interviews it came out that asking people for help was not considered as a favourable option. Björnberg (2011) pinpoints aspects concerning the help and support within the group of asylum seeker families; they did not want to rely on anybody financially or in any other possible way; even asking help from relatives was not seen as suitable. There might be shame or/and fear around asking help, because it exposes people in their vulnerable situations. According to Björnberg (ibid.), families were reluctant to enhance exchange relationships with anyone, while the language skills also had an impact on social relations. As a conclusion, the networking behaviour, or asking for help, are not straightforward issues, however, the respondents did not feel that asking for help was easy, showing vulnerability was not preferred in any circumstances, although all the respondents clearly had been needing help at some point.

I don't talk to anybody. When I feel bad, I don't talk with people. I hold that all in my heart. (R4)

According to the Finnish Immigration Service (2019b), reception services secure the livelihood and well-being of asylum seekers, and according to the law, asylum seekers are entitled to health and social services provided by the centres. Two of the respondents were not registered in a reception centre, and they were consequently not entitled to the benefits provided by them. One of the

interviewees, however, got social assistance from the social services in the capital area of Finland. He did not ask or was not willing to receive help from his social network. Usually, the networks consisted of fellow countrymen, and they could not provide any economical help, because people in the network were struggling with the same issues.

But I do not like to take from anyone. When someone says we can help you with this and this. I say: “Thank you, I don’t accept”. Because they are in the same situation, they have got negative also. (R1)

One respondent, who was destitute, described the difficulty of asking help. Even the basic material needs were not met, she was lacking needed toiletries.

I have so high level [to ask help] [...] I could ask anyone provide me some help or support, money or things. Sometimes I remember, even my hair, I don’t have any soap to wash my hair, but I couldn’t ask someone else to borrow me. (R69)

6.3 The future perspectives

The data based on the interviews of this study shows that the participants’ desire a future where they are living in peace, studying, getting employed and raising a family. These endeavours did not differ from those of the Finns themselves. The research results support the outcomes from the study of Yijälä and Nyman (2017) on this matter. The same study also found that participants were highly motivated to adapt to the Finnish culture. The respondents in the thesis did not favour idleness either, they wanted to develop their skills concerning the Finnish language and become active members of the Finnish society. Several respondents represented the idea, that they could not apply residence permit on the basis of employment. This was described not to be possible, for example, because they did not have a national passport from the country of origin with them in Finland. This was brought out in the interviews several times. Destitution can be prolonged, and people may end up being for a long time in these vulnerable situations. They also can be undocumented but still earn a living, yet the fear of being deported is haunting them (Crawley et al., 2011).

6.3.1 The residence and relocating

Four of the interviewees had on-going asylum processes according to the interviews, in addition, several persons had received their negative decisions recently. One interviewee previously had gone to Germany, but he was sent back to Finland based on the Dublin Regulation. One respondent was ready to think about leaving from Finland, however, not going back to his country of origin. He was ready to go to the UK, if there is no possibility to stay in Finland in the future. Several respondents in this study had made a subsequent application or appeal.

When I went to police on Monday, they made new fingerprint of me to make new asylum application. But they have told me, that I have to admit to my asylum case a little bit more, to make it stronger. (R2)

My wife has a residence permit. [...] Because I got a negative answer to the family reunification, that's why I'm applying for asylum. Yesterday I went to talk to the police about this, about the applying for asylum. I said, I don't want asylum, I my want family, I my want kids. [...] The kids want both parents. (R3)

The destitute interviewee did not have any other plans in store; it might be that the current draining situation was so overwhelming, that there was no energy to think any other plans than basically living from hand-to-mouth.

Mentally I couldn't make any plan B. And when I came to Finland, there is not any plan B for me. Just to try to stay and hope to get a place. How could I make plan B? I will still die in here, rather than go back or deport. (R6)

6.3.2 The fears

The most pervasive fear for the respondents was to be deported from Finland. One interviewee described the idea of being deported to same as dying, because she had a fear of being killed in the country of origin. Several respondents had similar thoughts, and they believed they would be killed in their home countries.

As you are afraid of death, I'm afraid of the deportation. The deportation for me like die. (R6)

Deportation. To return. [asked about the greatest fear] (R1)

So, I have no plans. [...] I have always this fear of sending back to place where I cannot live, and I am in danger of being killed. (R2)

[---] they put them in the jail, and I have militia also after me. They want to kill me there. [...] I only have this, how to be safe from the government and from militia, I don't want to go back. (R1)

During the asylum process, people are in an ambiguous situation, and the power is in the hands of the migration officials in Finland. This can cause fear and be constantly in the mind of an asylum seeker. One interviewee described that the fear of losing everything makes him incapable to be happy, although currently several things are stable in his life.

As a refugee I don't know anything. I can't decide about the future, Migri [The Finnish Immigration Office] decides. (R1)

My greatest fear is that my family will be separated. [...] I'm now with family, it feels good, but the fear rises up sometimes. (R3)

[...] like everything's not sure in my life. even I have a girlfriend, even I have family, even I have a job, like anytime they decide that deport me [...] Because I'm still in a process. For example, I cannot be happy. For all the time, because these things make me sad. [---] Still not okay. (R5)

6.3.3 The hopes and dreams

Ghorashi et al. (2018, p. 386) argue that, especially in difficult situations, it is essential to keep focusing on and asking about refugees' possibilities as well as dreams in order to support and enable their imaginative potential as a possible source of agency. The hopes and dreams of the interviewees were mostly in relation to working and studying. In addition, some of those who did not have a family, hoped to build one in Finland. None of the interviewees could speak Finnish fluently yet; some of the respondents pointed out that they want to learn the language at first. One person had learnt to speak

English fluently, and now he wished to learn the Finnish language. Korhonen et al. (2018) have pointed out that Finland can open new opportunities for studying, which were not available in person's home country.

The future, I want to support my children. I see the future in Finland, a peaceful and comfortable country. And a lot of work, I want to work, I have the energy to work. (R3)

I just need to make my language much better. And try to get two Finnish courses, and then I'm trying to go to "ammatti" [vocational education]. (R5)

I hope, first time I'm going to study [...] language. After that I can go to ammatti [vocational education] or I'm going to continue working [...] Yeah, but my goals in life to study and to build a family. Like have children. (R4)

Just get a residence, start work and to live my life normal as Finnish people. I want to live my life as Finnish people, study and work. [...] To make myself better and better. I don't like to sit [...] I like to do work and study or something. (R1)

The destitute interviewee had difficulty to describe her hopes or dreams for the future; the only thing she hoped for was to be in a safe place.

The future is so ambiguous and black. The present is so difficult reality, the past it's so bad and horrible. But I still feel that I have rest of the positive energy. [---] My dreams and hopes stopped for long time. I don't have any dreams or hopes. But my ambition is just to be in safe place. (R6)

6.4 The messages to Finnish decision-makers

Interviewees felt that their asylum cases were not investigated properly and that their legal assistance was inadequate. One respondent felt that his mental distress during the interview caused his inability to perform correctly (i.e. in the interview with the Finnish Immigration Service). One respondent said that he felt they are more looked more as "numbers" than as individual cases with consideration.

I felt that they just looked at us as a number [...] I cried two times in my interview, it was not easy to talk about my story. [...] I said, I really cannot do it, I just wanted to finish that, and they said that we can do another interview. And I wasn't able mentally and healthy [...] I was afraid of the interpreter that she's not saying everything I say because I thought if she's Muslim. [...] And I was talk about something, and I didn't say everything. (R5)

[...] when I am waiting for this decision for 10 months, there is no possibility to be in contact with my lawyers. [---] I had governmental lawyer which is not really good, and they are not following out case really well, in a best way. And after that, now at the moment, I don't have this right to get a lawyer, so I am not satisfied about that in general. [...] The only thing that I want to say to the immigration of, to the Finnish immigration, is that they use some professional staff for interviewing, someone who has well experience [...] So, then they can make some decisions that me and themselves can be happy with. (R2)

One thing that seemed to bother and give negative feelings of mistreatment in asylum process, was acknowledging that some people, who have gotten in troubles with the Finnish legal system, as reported in the media, had gained asylum; this caused feelings of injustice.

Like who make crime or something, they get residence. We see that, and people who are good people, they get negative. Now the news, every time they just say about the bad people, they don't think about the nice people. (R1)

The messages to policy makers included the wonder about why they were not given an opportunity to be recruited to the labour market in Finland, when the country needed workers in the opinion of several interviewees. In addition, one respondent felt that there could have been help provided in the reception centres with seeking work, and she would have had liked to have that help.

I really was hope to find this kind of, the places or instructions to find a work, because I'm really clever, I'm really motivated. With my willingness, with my pleasure, I would like to work and to help people. (R6)

Why Finland won't, came like these many guys, people here, and these all can work. and why they don't use them in Finland, why they give me negative. And they don't give me any paper, and they go to work black or something, because they need money. Finland needs people to work. (R1)

One interviewee felt upset because he was told to go back to his country. The wordings of officials upset him, because he did not see going back to the country of origin as an option; this occurrence refers to him being asked to have an assisted voluntary return.

They don't give any change in this country because I can't do anything without residence. [...] Sometimes, the words are like bad, they are said: "come back to your country, we give you money", like two thousand or three thousand. There are many who can help in your country. I said [...] I can't come back to my country. (R4)

A common feeling was that the asylum claim was not investigated properly, and the respondents described that the situation is hard in Finland currently, but it would be unbearable in their home country that is why they still chose to stay in Finland. One respondent articulated that the biggest proof that he is talking the truth, is that he is still staying in the country, although he lives in a highly troublesome situation. The respondent whose family was in Finland wished that the Finnish authorities would make a positive decision for him, because he wanted to be with his family, and the family had a residence permit in Finland.

They give me negative, and the reason for negative, they don't have a proof. And the big proof, I am here, I get negative and I stayed. And I don't have support, I don't have a place to sleep, I don't have anything, but I stayed here, I didn't go back to country x [the country of origin]. [...] My life is difficult in country x, in Finland also. (R1)

For decision makers, I ask for a family reunification, that my case will get forward. [...] I hope they make a good decision. (R3)

I want to say to them, they did so wrong decision. Because there is so lot of people, they really have so difficult life [...] But they didn't success when they [...] For example,

me as myself, I hid myself since 2001 from my family, because I am afraid to come back to my home country to my family. (R6)

7 Conclusions

This research aimed to identify the state of resources, coping strategies and prospects for the future of refused asylum seekers in Finland. In addition, the thesis considered the respondents' messages to Finnish decision-makers. This chapter covers the main results. This chapter also discusses the results of the research, describes the implications of this research, and makes suggestion for future research.

The resources

All participants lacked access to resources in some respects due to their legal status (i.e. for lack of a residence permit). Access to financial resources was dominated by the right to work, which most of the participants did not have. Bloch (2013) describes that one of main barriers faced by irregular migrants is the lack of access, without documents, to the regular labour market. This influences greatly on participants' mental well-being and causes a stage of idleness. Most of the participants in this thesis stayed in a private accommodation with friends, or with someone who they paid rent to. Everyone had a place to stay at the time of the interview, however, some the respondents were living in severely precarious conditions. The social assets were usually quite limited, but the existing networks had a valuable meaning for the respondents. The study also found that social relationships with locals resulted in being fruitful but, in addition, abusive relationships had emerged. Some meaningful assets were gained from the non-governmental organizations working with the undocumented migrants, such as legal assistance and social assets. The respondents had poor access to public services based on the interviews. Access to health services was constrained, although physically respondents were in quite good condition, psychological help was needed. All the respondents had a major mental distress. Stress was the most damaging and overarching symptom owned by the group; there seemed to be a great need for the services regarding mental health.

The coping strategies

Building social networks seems to be beneficial on many levels based on this research, but for the majority the social networks were constrained. Generally, the networks helped in finding an accommodation, however, compensation was paid for the housing. Getting a job was desirable but difficult. Applying work from the grey economy seemed to be explained by the difficulty at gaining access to legal employment and by a contextual necessity; impossibility to live in a reception centre. The use of alcohol to relieve stress and forget the situation was done rarely, but it was common. From the other mechanisms, doing physical exercise was a common method used. Asking for help, both emotionally and concretely, was difficult. Mental distress was not talked about to anyone. It also felt nearly impossible to ask financial or other assistance from others. Snellman et al. (2014) have pinpointed that people possess factors such as resilience and other resources and capabilities that protect mental health in various situations. Different methods for coping were localised: building social networks, working legally and illegally, using alcohol, asking help and coping through other mechanisms.

The perspectives for the future

The overarching similarity between the respondents was the fear of being deported. Finland was considered as a safe place to be. The undocumented and destitute interviewee had decided to stay in Finland even though she had little resources if any in Finland, for example. Several interviewees had made a subsequent asylum application. The interviewees hoped to learn the Finnish language and get a job and study a vocational qualification. Earlier study in the UK (Crawley et al., 2011) suggest that paperless people who cannot return to their country for one reason or another, even if they had received a negative residence permit, still choose to remain in the country. This study supports the

notion that people will stay in Finland even if they do not have the necessary resources for a sustainable livelihood.

The messages to Finnish decision-makers

The main messages of the asylum process were that the interviewees felt that their asylum processes were not investigated properly by the Finnish Immigration Service, and that the legal assistance was seen inadequate and incompetent. In addition, the respondents wanted to have a possibility to be included to the Finnish labour market. The interviewees also described that they did not want to return to their home country even though they had received a negative decision on their asylum application.

7.1 Discussion

Several similarities have been found in the outcomes with the existing research. Crawley et al. (2011) focused in their study on the experiences of undocumented migrants in the UK. Both studies, this and the study done by Crawley et al. (ibid.), highlight the importance of social relationships and social networks. In addition, both studies detected that the participants had symptoms of chronic stress. There were also differences between research outcomes; one thing that stood out from the research in the UK, was that many undocumented migrants used fake identity cards and passports for seeking to get employed. Such an issue did not appear in this study. Similar results have been found with Finnish studies done by HDL (2017) and Yijälä & Nyman (2017). HDL (2017) found out that undocumented migrants have a major need for counselling, service guidance and psychosocial support in their own language. The results from this study highlight the need for psychosocial support, therefore more counselling and guidance are recommended for the group. FRA (2015) points out that migrants in an irregular situation according to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) still should have right to enjoy the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health. The study by HDL (2017) revealed that undocumented migrants have a desire to get work and on that ground a residence permit. According to this study, all the interviewees wanted to work, and gain a residence permit, however, gaining a residence permit on the basis of employment was considered to be difficult. Yijälä and Nyman (2018) summed up asylum seekers' messages for Finns and decision-makers. The messages were in many ways similar compared with this study. According to Yijälä and Nyman (2017) participants in their study wanted to live in a safe country and be employed; the participant pointed out that the government should be careful of what kind of people are let to stay in the country; and that they would like to be not seen as a homogenous group since their educational backgrounds vary, for example. In this study, the messages to decision makers and experiences of the asylum process included a wish to be included to the labour market in Finland and the respondents experienced that their asylum cases should have been considered more carefully

7.1.1 The Finnish government and refused asylum seekers

This study highlights that the Finnish asylum system and immigration policies are not functioning in a sustainable way. Currently, there is a group of people living in Finland as undocumented and struggling to make their ends meet. The possibilities for this group to gain agency in their lives seems to be made difficult by several practises. There are remarks from other countries that people prefer to stay in the country as destitute than return to their country of origin (Crawley et al., 2011). This study strongly showed that individuals did not feel able to return to their country of origin, even though their asylum claim had not been successful.

First and foremost, vulnerable migrants should be under special protection throughout the migration process, and they should be detected as well as recognized from the group. Noteworthy is that some migrants are more at risk of human rights violations and abuses than others. Discrimination is experienced due to age, gender, ethnicity, race, nationality, religion, language, sexual orientation,

gender identity and migration status, for example. Specially at risk are pregnant and nursing women, persons in poor health (including persons with HIV), persons with disabilities, older persons and children (including unaccompanied and separated children) because of their physical or psychological situation (OHCHR, 2018, p. 7). The restrictive decisions of policy makers particularly affect vulnerable groups, since they can be easily exploited. In addition, they may be incapable to increase their resources in ways that other find possible. For them, it may be impossible to obtain a residence permit on any other grounds. The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR, 2018) has created a set of principles and guidelines on the human rights protection of migrants in vulnerable situations for the States which should be applied in Finland as well as possible.

This thesis highlights the heterogeneous stories of individuals. The research does not only concentrate on the lack of assets of refused asylum seekers, in addition, the study is detecting available resources, coping strategies and hopes of the group. Although, the precarious situation, for many refused asylum seekers may feel hopeless at times, no one from the participants in this study had totally lost their hope. In Finland, a climate of trust, interactive dialogue and an institution dealing with undocumented migrants should be created between undocumented migrants and Finnish society actors (URMI, 2018). The attitudes towards refused asylum seekers in our society should also change for the better. It can be concluded that the process in which these people have been, has been a wearing process, and some of them the life in Finland it is a daily struggle to survive. Although in Finland, the Constitution guarantees a necessary livelihood and care for undocumented migrants, a part of this group is afraid of using these services out of fear that they will be caught and removed from Finland, in addition, not everyone is aware of the rights to these services (Jauhiainen et al., 2018). For these reasons, it is important to uphold the concept of “firewall” in Finland, which stands for the measures to separate immigration enforcement activities from public service provision, to ensure that immigration enforcement authorities are not able to access the information concerning the immigration status of individuals who seek assistance or services from medical facilities, schools and other social service institutions, and so forth (OHCHR, 2018).

The global movement of people seeking protection, employment and family reunion poses economic, social and political opportunities and challenges (Crawley et al., 2011, p. 2). We should focus on a national level, more to the positive sides which migration has, and what kind of resources these people might have; the knowledge and skills they possess can enrich the host country. Rather than seeing these people as a troublesome and illegal group. Jauhiainen et al. (2018, p. 9) point out in their recommendations that international research results should be adopted to the Finnish contexts so that the related practises and laws put in force have desired effects on human rights, security, public health and the gray economy in Finland. There is a lot of research abroad that calls into question political decision-making that limits the rights of the group (e.g. Crawley et al., 2011), and this study supports the idea of making political decisions based on researched knowledge. One example of a study that should be considered is done by FRA (2015, p. 66) The study is about the provision of health care to migrants in an irregular situation, and the results support that “Providing access to regular preventive healthcare for migrants in an irregular situation would be cost-saving for healthcare systems. Even when using a simple model to estimate costs, the implications are clear: treating a condition only when it becomes an emergency not only endangers the health of a patient, but also results in a greater economic burden to healthcare systems”.

7.1.2 Importance of third sector services

OHCHR (2018) highlights that migrants in vulnerable situations are not inherently vulnerable, nor do they lack resilience or agency. Perceiving refused asylum seekers as passive individuals, who need help, does not help the group to gain more agency necessarily. In order to give more agency to the group, refused asylum seekers and undocumented migrants should be given more opportunities to be

heard and their experiences should be acknowledged in Finnish decision-making and in the service planning. According to Adler (2008), the concept of agency refers to the ability and possibilities to influence one's own life. According to the results of this thesis, the most excluded the refused asylum seekers felt, when they were not given the right to work. If the person is not given an opportunity to work, then he or she cannot earn the livelihood for him- or herself; the lack of resources results as a lack of agency for the person. When refused asylum seekers do not have a voice, then the third sector services have an important position to convey the needs of this group forward. But only relying on the third sector as a service provider for the group is inadequate. Finnish government and the decision makers have responsibility to give these people professional support, and adequate services according to the universal human rights and applicable laws, and that is why the cooperation between the government is essential. The problems concerning undocumented migrants should be recognized at all levels of political decision making, and acts towards prohibiting more problems from occurring.

Although paperless children have not been interviewed in this study, some families with children are currently undocumented in Finland (HDL, 2019). Undocumented children are in exceptionally vulnerable position in Finnish society, because they are not in the civil registry. The parents of the undocumented children are not residents of the municipality, so they are not registered in social and health services of any municipality. Children are therefore at risk of being excluded from the child protection services (Pakolaisneuvonta, 2018). The Finnish Refugee Advice Centre (2019) is a non-governmental organisation which assists people in particularly vulnerable situations such as: unaccompanied minor asylum seekers, victims of human trafficking, torture survivors, and undocumented migrants.

7.1.3 Mental health and social inclusion/exclusion

This study highlights the need for psychosocial support because many of the interviewees had severe psychological distress. However, mental distress was not talked about to anyone, which can restrict the possibilities to reach help. According to Teunissen et al. (2014), the most common mental health problems among undocumented migrants were sleeping disorders, addiction, and psychotic disorders, anxiety, depression and PTSD. It is also known that undocumented migrants have many mental health problems. Castaneda et al. (2018) point out that immigrants, especially those who come as refugees, experience more mental health problems than mainstream population. This study supports these claims because most of the interviewees had had serious problems with mental health. Extremely harmful to these mental health problems is that, after receiving a negative decision on their residence permit application, individuals see that they are not entitled to any assistance. According to Castaneda et al. (ibid.) asylum seeker men appear to be more likely suicidal than women. This may be due to that they use less mental health services, but also because of the fear of having to go back to their country of origin. Other things that may affect them are, for example, the pressure to succeed in the new home country (this may be caused by the family in the home country), the idleness (e.g. the lack of access to work), and the use of intoxicants. Loneliness, social isolation and the lack of social support are influencers as well. As the asylum seeker phase lengthens, the mental load increases and hence the risk of suicide. Asylum seekers should also be "prepared" for a possible negative asylum decision by discussing in advance the feelings it might raise and going through what they can do if they get an unwanted decision.

According to this study, social relationships played a particularly important role in terms of the resources available to a refused asylum seeker. The interviewees considered social relationships important for their mental coping, in addition, social relations provided help in finding a place to live and guidance to necessary services. The social exclusion of the group may only have negative effects. Ghorashi, de Boer & ten Holder (2018) describe that the exclusion of asylum seekers is done by exclusionary practices. This study found out that a negative decision on asylum application had a

very multi-dimensional impact on an individual's life and excludes him or her from the services, even if individuals have rights to some services, they may not be aware of them, or may not seek them because of the fear being deported. The denial of the right to asylum results as loss of an identity, economic difficulties, and may also lead to a world of crime. It has profound impacts on quality of one's life (Blitz & Otero-Iglesias, 2011). The results of this study support the notion that obtaining a negative decision on asylum application was directly linked to persons' mental distress and potential self-harm.

7.2 Implications of the research

This thesis strives to bring up-to-date information about the experiences of refused asylum seekers in Finland to the research field, policy makers and those working with the target group. In addition, it aims to give a clear picture of the resources and coping strategies of refused asylum seekers in Finland. Based on these conclusions, researchers, practitioners and policy makers should consider the following issues:

- Refused asylum seekers' views, experiences and opinions should be listened to and acknowledged. For example, all interviewees felt that they would not by any means return to their country of origin. These views should be considered in Finnish decision-making, and possibly provide the group with other channels to stay legally in the country (at least give an opportunity to be employed), so they do not have to rely on e.g. illegal work or abusive relationships with locals.
- This study highlights the services needed by the group, such as the greater need for mental health support. Also, the refused asylum seekers and undocumented migrants should be properly informed about their rights in the early states and provided with suitable services. The research encourages to have cooperation between government, municipalities and the third sector to meet the service needs of refused asylum seekers and undocumented migrants
- The study illuminates the lives of those who have been denied asylum. This group includes people of different ages, genders, ethnicities etc. Overall, refused asylum seekers are not a part of homogenous mass and should be treated accordingly as individuals.
- The information obtained in the study largely supports previous studies and their recommendations for policy makers (see the studies by Crawley et al. (2011) and Yijälä & Nyman (2017), HDL (2017) and Jauhiainen et al. (2018)).

7.3 Future research

Future studies should address the views of vulnerable groups within the group of refused asylum seekers such as families, children and people owning disabilities, for example. In addition, the effect of gender could be more closely examined in the future studies. According to Crawley et al. (2011, p. 52), gender is an important factor in determining the survival and livelihood strategies employed to cope with the threat of destitution and accompanying risks and vulnerability. Snellman et al. (2014) stress that it would be important to have more research on e.g. asylum seeker' coping strategies to further develop the support for mental health problems of the group. Mental distress was a major part of the lives of refused asylum seekers in this study, therefore research should be conducted about how to bring more psychosocial support for this group and what kind of influences would it have. Jauhiainen et al. (2018) point out that the subject of undocumented migrants is under-researched in Finland. This makes it difficult to monitor the development and impact of the phenomenon to form and implement a policy based on research and facts. Thus, all kind of research about refused asylum

seekers and undocumented migrants is needed in Finland in order to make informed policy changes. Furthermore, social media plays a major role in the decision-making and everyday lives of refused asylum seekers and undocumented people, thus the influences of social media, and networking online, should be studied (HDL, 2017). The influence of one's culture should be also considered when occupying future research.

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Appendix 1. Information letter on research

Information on research

13th February 2019

Resources, Coping Strategies and Future Prospects: Experiences of Refused Asylum Seekers in Finland

Aim and purpose

The aim of the study is to investigate resources, future prospects and coping strategies concerning refused asylum seekers in Finland. The purpose of the study is to convey information to a wider audience about the difficult situation that several people face in Finland.

Participants in the study are persons who are or have been asylum seekers and whose asylum application has been rejected. Some of the people who have received a negative asylum decision may have found other grounds for staying in the country, such as work or study; these people will be left out of the research, since the study focuses on the most vulnerable people who are in the greatest need to be heard. Researcher may also interview people who are still living in the reception centres and have received negative asylum decisions for the first time or more, their appeal process or new application is ongoing. For the study researcher would like to interview failed asylum seekers who have no other grounds for staying in the country and may be subject to voluntary return or deportation.

Research Progress

For the research at least eight different people will be individually interviewed, and each interview will last about an hour. The interview will be recorded. Interviewees participate voluntarily in the survey.

Together with the interviewee a suitable place for the interview will be chosen. You will not be paid a fee for participating in the study.

Benefits of research participation

It is possible that you do not benefit from participating in this study. However, research may help to convey information about refused asylum seekers for a wider audience.

Confidentiality, data processing

In the study, your identity and other identifiable information are only known to the researcher, and they are all confidential. All information and research data collected from you will be handled in a coded manner so that your individual data cannot be identified from research results. The research data is only used and kept for as long as the investigation is ongoing.

Volunteering

Participation in this research is entirely voluntary. You may refuse to participate, suspend your participation or cancel your consent at any time without giving any reason. Your refusal, suspension or withdrawal of consent will not in any way affect the services you may need now or in the future.

The research results

The research will be published through Gothenburg University Library. For the

interviewee a completed research can be sent electronically if he/she wishes so, and gives his/her contact information (email adress).

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Research worker: _____
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Appendix 2. Informed consent

Informed consent

The following is a presentation of how we will use the data collected in the interview.

The research project is a part of our education in the International Master's programme in Social Work and Human Rights at the University of Gothenburg, Sweden. In order to insure that our project meets the ethical requirements for good research we promise to adhere to the following principles:

- Interviewees in the project will be given information about the purpose of the project.
- Interviewees have the right to decide whether he or she will participate in the project, even after the interview has been concluded.
- The collected data will be handled confidentially and will be kept in such a way that no unauthorized person can view or access it.

The interview will be recorded as this makes it easier for us to document what is said during the interview and also helps us in the continuing work with the project. In our analysis some data may be changed so that no interviewee will be recognized. After finishing the project the data will be destroyed. The data we collect will only be used in this project.

You have the right to decline answering any questions, or terminate the interview without giving an explanation.

You are welcome to contact us or our supervisor in case you have any questions (email addresses below).

Student name & e-mail
Teija Kukkonen gusteiku@student.gu.se

Supervisor name & e-mail
Adrián Groglopo
adrian.groglopo@socwork.gu.se

Interviewee

Appendix 3. Interview guide

Introduction

Could you begin by telling me a little about yourself/and your family in Finland?

- name, gender, country of origin and the family relations in Finland

How long have you been in Finland?

When did you get the last refusal to your asylum application, and how many refusals have you received?

Resources/Assets

Physical: Where do you/your family live/s and how would you describe your living conditions? Do you pay rent? How many times have you changed the place where you live?

Public: Have you/your family used any services provided by government, NGOs or church, for example, and what kind?

-reception/day centre, hospital, school etc. ? How often?

Human: How would you describe your health / how is the health of other people in the family? Do you feel you/your family are able to get proper health services? What is your education and where have you worked? Have these qualifications helped you in any way in Finland?

Social: Do you/your family get help from your friend/s, neighbour/s, volunteer/s, faith group/s? Do you have a partner in Finland with residence permit, does she/he help you and how? Do you have any other relations which may help you in any way (financially, socially) and how?

Financial: What is your main income source? Do you have other sources of money? How are/is you/your family getting by on the current income?

Coping Strategies:

How do you feel at the moment? How would you describe your general mood?

Do you have any negative thoughts? If you have them, how do you deal with them?

Where do you get help if you need it, and what kind is the help do you receive?

Do you feel that you/the family would need more help with something and what kind of help?

Have you used any destructive behaviour/drugs as a way to cope with your situation and if you have, how did it make you feel?

How do you feel about asking help? Where do you get support/help?

What do you do if the money runs out too quickly?

Have you had to do something to get money that you would not otherwise do, and what was it?

How did you feel about it?

Future Perspectives:

What are your thoughts about your future?

- Hopes, dreams, possibilities?

- Concerns, fears?

What are your thoughts about your country of origin? How do you see the future if you/your family would return to your country of origin? Have you prepared in any way to return to your home country or going to some other country?

How has the refusal of your application affected to your ideas about the future?

Are you/the family afraid of deportation?

Do you see yourself somewhere after one year or after five years and where? What you would be doing then? Do you have any plan B if life does not go as planned?

Conclusion

What are your thoughts about your asylum process? Were you satisfied with it? How did you feel about your legal assistance during the process?

What are your greetings to Finnish government and to decision makers? Do you have any improvement ideas, about what the Finnish government could do differently concerning refused asylum seekers?

Thank you very much!