



# BEST PRACTICE IN ADULT EDUCATION FOR A JUST TRANSITION

**Swedish from day one**  
Green Transition and Civic  
Education of Migrants

**JULY 2024**



Co-funded by  
the European Union

## Swedish from day one

### –Green Transition and Civic Education of Migrants

#### Context and Initiative Details

Name of the initiative	Swedish from day one
Geographical scope	Local, Örebro Municipality
Sources of funding	Swedish from day one” was funded by the Swedish government
Stakeholders involved	The Swedish National Council of Adult Education (Folkbildningsrådet), has a government mandate to oversee study associations and folk high schools, regulates the assignment and allocates funds to ABF nationally. ABF Örebro County applies for funds from ABF, then plans the course content, organizes the courses, and recruits participants. The course and its content can vary across the country, but this description is based on ABF Örebro County’s work.
Duration of the initiative	2016 – 2023
Target audience	Asylum seekers living in Migration Agency accommodation facilities or in their own housing in a municipality. Asylum seekers who have been granted residence permits but who, while awaiting municipal placement, remain in Migration Agency accommodation facilities. Individuals from Ukraine who are registered with the Migration Agency.
Social justice focus area	
Goals of the initiative	<p>The special adult education initiative “Swedish from Day One” is part of the “Early Interventions for Asylum Seekers” (TIA) initiative. It aims to provide newly arrived asylum seekers with the opportunity to learn Swedish and gain a basic understanding of Swedish society during their asylum period. The program includes civic education, incorporating the green transition. Individuals from Ukraine in Sweden under the mass protection directive also have the right to participate in the program, provided they are registered with the Migration Agency.</p> <p>Understanding Swedish Society: Participants are introduced to the basics of Swedish society, including its democratic values, societal structure, and the rights and obligations of Swedish citizens. This includes lessons on how Swedish democracy functions, the importance of voting, and how to engage in community activities.</p> <p>Civic Rights and Responsibilities: Education covers individual rights and societal responsibilities, emphasizing the role of citizens in maintaining a democratic society.</p> <p>Circular Economy: Education on the circular economy includes principles of reducing waste, recycling, and sustainable consumption. Participants learn about the importance of sustainability and how it benefits themselves, society, and the environment.</p> <p>Environmental Sustainability: Broader concepts of environmental sustainability are taught, such as climate change.</p>

#### Good Practices Description

##### Stakeholder engagement in the process

Study associations, National Council of Adult Education, the government.

### Methodology used

To start early education in the Swedish language, Swedish society (civic education), and the job market to integrate them into society more quickly. By incorporating ABF's adult education activities with open enrollment in residential areas and asylum accommodations to receive asylum seekers. The focus is on asylum-seeking women. In civic education, the green transition should be emphasized with a special focus on the circular economy.

Methods are: **Interactive Learning** - The program uses interactive and participatory methods, encouraging students to actively engage with the material. Group discussions, role-playing, and interactive exercises help participants understand and internalize democratic values.

**Facilitated Discussions:** Instructors facilitate discussions instead of lecturing, promoting a more inclusive and democratic learning environment where all participants can share their views and experiences.

**Tailored Content:** The content is adapted to the participants' backgrounds and experiences, making it more relevant and accessible. For example, discussions might relate democratic principles to participants' experiences in their home countries.

**Integration with Social study:** Green transition topics are integrated into social study, showing how environmental responsibility is part of being a good citizen. For example, lessons on voting might include discussions about how your choice can impact environmental policies in Sweden.

**Practical Activities:** Participants have engaged in and practically tried recycling, community clean-up days, and visits to local recycling centers. These practical experiences help them understand and apply the principles of the green transition in their daily lives.

Adjustment to Target Group is achieved through:

**Cultural Relevance:** The content is made culturally relevant by considering the diverse backgrounds of participants. This is done by using simplified language and relatable examples.

**Immediate Relevance:** Given the immediate needs of refugees, the program connects green transition topics to benefits for the individual, such as saving money by reducing electricity consumption and minimizing waste.

**Overcoming Barriers:** "Swedish from Day One" addresses language barriers by using clear and simple language and providing translations when necessary.

### Teaching approaches

Popular education is characterized by learner-centered instruction that takes place in small groups. The focus is on active participation, where all members contribute their experiences and knowledge. This creates a democratic and inclusive environment where all voices are heard. The leader acts as a facilitator who supports and guides the group rather than teaching in a traditional manner. The content of popular education is often tailored to the interests and needs of the participants, making learning relevant and engaging. The pedagogy of popular education promotes independent learning, collaboration, and the practical application of knowledge.

### Challenges and outcomes

#### Key factors contributing to success

Overall, the initiatives reach four out of ten asylum seekers according to the report. Among the success factors mentioned is the ability of adult education to adapt methods and content to the needs and conditions of the participants. The National Audit Office highlights in its evaluation that the initiatives contribute to fulfilling the purposes of the state's grants to adult education. A significant portion of the initiatives focuses on democracy issues and culture, and they serve as an important meeting place for integration and social exchanges.

### Encountered difficulties and challenges

The need for education is significant, but resources are lacking. Temporary funding and changes in government affect support. The new right-wing government cut all financial support, reducing activities. If continued, efforts must address language barriers, cultural differences, and extensive outreach.

**Language barriers:** Many refugees may have limited knowledge of the language used to communicate environmental issues, making understanding difficult. **Cultural differences:** Differences in cultural perspectives and priorities can affect how environmental issues are perceived and valued. **Practical challenges:** Refugees may focus more on immediate needs like housing, jobs, and safety, making environmental issues seem less relevant. **Limited access to information:** Lack of access to relevant and easily understandable information about the green transition can also be a barrier. **Economic constraints:** Many refugees have limited financial resources, making it harder to invest in sustainable solutions that can be costly initially.

### Recommendations

More social and motivational support, guidance, and matching support are needed. Practical applications connecting theory and practice are crucial. Reliable and sustainable funding is essential for the program's maintenance and expansion.

### Impact

124,132 asylum seekers have participated across Sweden, with 610 in ABF Örebro län. Participants improved their Swedish language skills and knowledge about Swedish society. The program created structure, routine, and a sense of community, breaking isolation and improving mental well-being. Many participants found SFI studies easier and progressed to other educational programs or employment. Distance learning enhanced digital engagement. There was a clear focus on employment, including CV writing and job applications. Participants showed improvements in language skills, understanding of democratic processes, and knowledge about environmental sustainability, feeling more integrated into Swedish society.