Travail de Maturité Gymnasiale

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"Could youth peer-to-peer tutoring help refugees with their integration into Swiss society?"

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Summary

The refugee population in Switzerland has almost tripled over the last decade, with increasing numbers of people seeking a safe place to build their future. Therefore, it has become ever more crucial to assess the Swiss integration system and ensure that refugees, as individuals, are getting the support they need.

The refugees cause deeply interests me, both on a local and on an international scale. I believe we should do as much as possible to help migrants seeking shelter from war and persecution. This project was an opportunity for me to act for this cause and, hopefully, have an impact on the situation.

Through research, interviews and surveys of refugee integration associations, refugees and young Swiss residents, I found that despite existing support programs for migrants, there really is a need for additional programs targeting the young refugee population, to help them approach their Swiss peers and integrate into the Swiss system.

I applied my prior experience as a tutor and developed the idea of a peer-to-peer tutoring program between the Swiss youth and young refugees. This would complement existing programs and encourage contact between the two populations, opening Swiss youth to new cultures and helping young refugees with language, schoolwork and social integration.

This idea was later tested through a pilot project, with encouraging results. I concluded that peer-to-peer tutoring could focus either on funded support classes centered around schoolwork or on volunteer activities and exchanges.

I am excited to share my work and hope this project may inspire others.

This document was made without any AI support.

Preface

Achieving this project couldn't have been done without the help and input of many people. I am immensely grateful for their testimonies, suggestions and support.

In my search for interviews, I was lucky to have had quick answers from association members who were often willing to meet me. Therefore, I'd like to thank Alexandre Favini, EVAM coordinator in the Morges region; Jean-Claude Huot, member of the Action Parainages association; Estela Mucientes Fernández, intern coordinator in the PAIRES association and Catherine Fournier, member of the RYL! association in charge of the French-speaking regions of Switzerland, for their time and valuable information.

It was important for this project to include refugees' points of view, and I had the chance to meet six young immigrants (Hamisha, Masha, Michael, Mujtaba, Tiages and Tyrhas) who generously agreed to answer my questions and share their stories. I am thankful for their precious testimonies.

I would also like to thank Isabelle Berney-Monnier, UMA delegate for the CRENOL region, who kindly agreed to explain to me how the school system steps in to support young migrants' integration.

I was lucky to find three refugees (Daria, Wanlow and Attaullah) and two young Swiss residents (Louisa and Sorine) who volunteered to join my project. Their enthusiasm and dedication made this experience truly incredible.

Finally, I am grateful to my teacher, Mr. Patricio Berna, for his availability and support.

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1. Introduction

The subject of my TM is the integration of young refugees in Switzerland. Within this subject I am working on a way to help these migrants with an original method, which is youth-to-youth tutoring.

I started off with some background research to understand the system and the topic I was working on. My hypotheses were that young refugees experience difficulties with the language, adapting to the Swiss school system, new social codes and making friends amongst the locals. I wondered how thoroughly the existing frameworks supporting immigrants tackle these obstacles.

However, many questions arose: is this project adapted to the current refugee situation? What would be necessary for it to be successful? To find answers to these questions I sought out the advice and testimonies of association members, young refugees and potential volunteers through interviews.

They shared with me their valuable opinions on my project, for example the fact that the program should be centered around mutual exchange and should not be just about one person helping another.

Combining all these elements, I imagined this program as based on school support classes, so that the Swiss tutors may have some base to converse upon, but later evolving into a real relation, where friendship and mutual exchanges are key. This project was then tested over a six-week period.

My aim was to produce a work of innovation and pertinence, which opens new perspectives on what could be done in the studied field.

2. Context of Refugees in Switzerland

2.1. Statistics on refugees in Switzerland

To understand the situation of refugees in my region and learn about their different needs and difficulties, I started my work by considering refugee politics and statistics in the Canton de Vaud (all illustrations shown below have been translated from French to English using Google Translate). Additional information on the functioning of the Swiss asylum system can be found in this TM's annexes.

Finding quantitative statistics on refugees is difficult, due mainly to the fact that this population is included in other migrant populations, sharing the same permits as them, as explained in Anne-Laure Bertrand's book [2] on the Swiss asylum procedure.

The registered refugee population in the canton de Vaud has almost tripled over a decade, going from 2967 people in 2014 to 8775 people in 2024. That year, the biggest represented continent of origin was Asia (3,809 refugees), with most of them coming from Syria and Afghanistan. Africa is close behind with 3,360 refugees welcomed in this canton and coming mostly from Eritrea. There are also refugees from Europe and America; some are stateless (Tableaux de l'Annuaire Statistique [10]). These increasing numbers can be explained by recent conflicts worldwide like wars in Ukraine or in Syria.

Most asylum seekers are granted the F permit, which allows them to stay temporarily in Switzerland (Annuaire Statistique [3]). Many of them benefit from State support to help with finances and integration.

It is interesting to note that integration policies were adopted quite late in Switzerland, as reported in Bertrand's book [1]. Politicians only started studying this issue in the late 20th century. This can be explained by the fact that social integration was considered the migrant's responsibility, and that the professional integration of refugees wasn't regarded as particularly problematic at the time.

The repartition of refugees in Cantons is dictated by a state-established algorithm, which is efficient but doesn't consider important parameters like keeping family members together. Thus, three times out of five, corrections must be done by hand and can lead to a non-proportional distribution of migrants amongst the Cantons, as illustrated on this map from a 24 Heures news article [9].

Distribution of asylum seekers by population

The cantons in blue show a negative gap, meaning they receive fewer people than predicted by the distribution key.

The cantons in red show a positive gap.
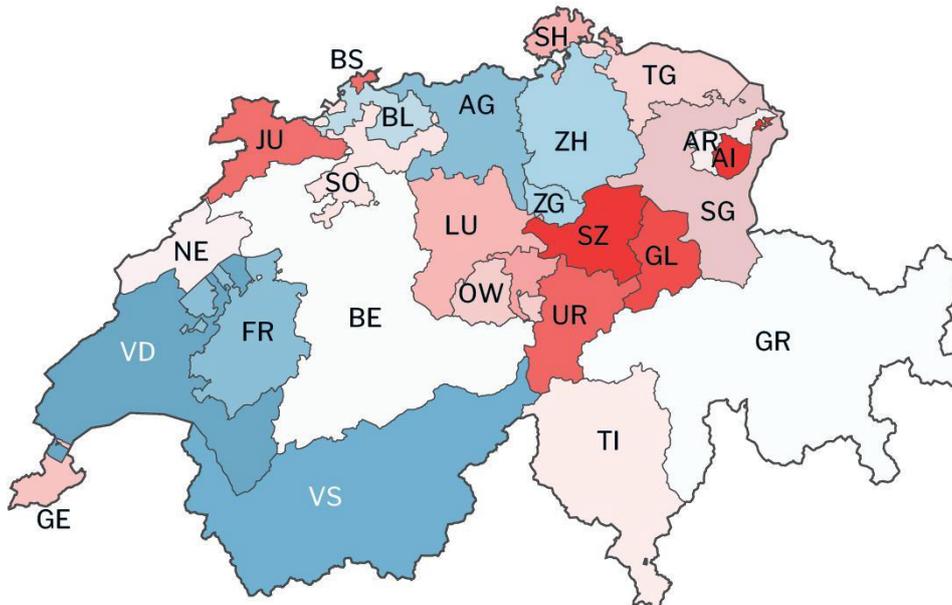
The map is based on SEM figures for the period from March 1, 2019, to June 30, 2023. We have been denied access to the database

Here we can see that the Canton de Vaud welcomes fewer refugees than predicted by the algorithm. Such fluctuations can impact the cantons' strategies regarding refugee integration and the different canton populations' opinions on immigration. Furthermore, this kind of revelation is seized upon by certain political groups to demonstrate "dysfunctions" in the asylum system (see reference source).

Note however that this map includes only refugees and does not represent overall distribution of migrants in respect to different cantons' populations, which is strongest in the French-speaking cantons and Zürich.

Imbalances can also be observed on the scale of municipalities, as seen on the map below (from the website of the EVAM [4]). 31% of municipalities cite the supervision of asylum seekers as one of their main problems. "Many of them no longer know where to house refugees", states Claudia Kratochvil, President of the Association of Swiss Municipalities (ACS) [9].

Distribution of the LARA population (asylum, emergency aid, people in need of protection, and the capacity of federal centers) in the municipalities of the Canton of Vaud

Status as of 30.04.25

◯ 10 000   ◯ 40 000   ◯ 100 000

% Migrants/Municipal population

< 1.49   1.49-2.97   ≥ 2.97

Cantonal ratio = 1.48501

Map: Number of inhabitants as of 31.12.24 Source: EVAM Created with Datawrapper
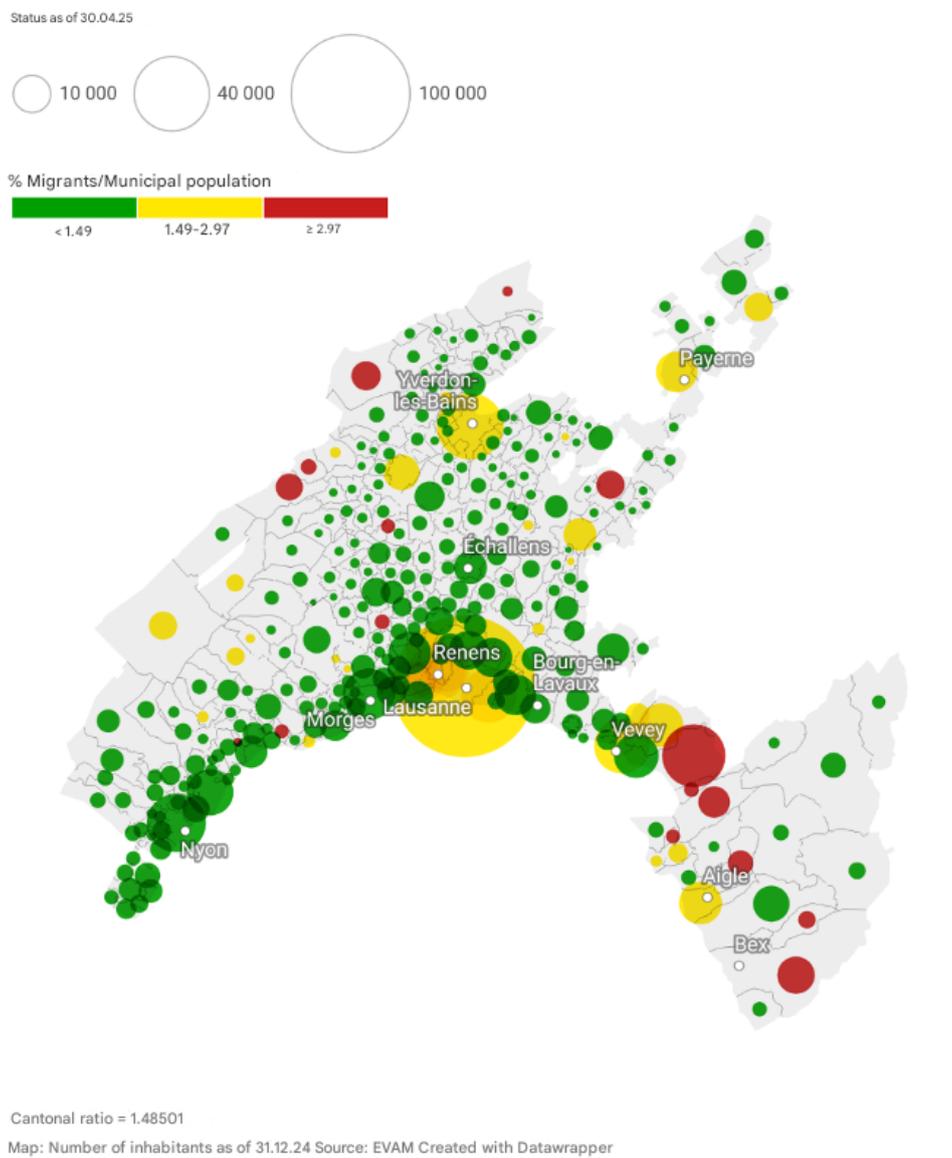
Here we see that the municipality of Ste-Croix welcomes a lot of refugees compared to the size of its population. There can be many explanations to this kind of situation. In this case, we can suppose that it is due to the municipality's asylum center which welcomes many migrants.

Amongst this migrant population, many of them are minors. In 2023, 41% of asylum seekers were children, with most of them aged between 14 and 17 years old, as represented on the graph below from the organization S*ave The Children* [12]. It is interesting to observe that a considerable number of these minors (26%) were unaccompanied[1]. This could be due to the fact that unaccompanied minors may

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[1] "Migrant children who have been separated from their relatives and are not being cared for by an adult who is responsible for doing so." – adapted from the UN's definition of the term

have a greater chance of being accepted by the country than a family with children due to their vulnerable status.

Asylum application statistics in Switzerland 2023 concerning children and young minors

Period: January 1 to December 31, 2023

Total asylum applications 2023: 30,223

59%   41%

44%   26% MNA*   24%   11%   21%
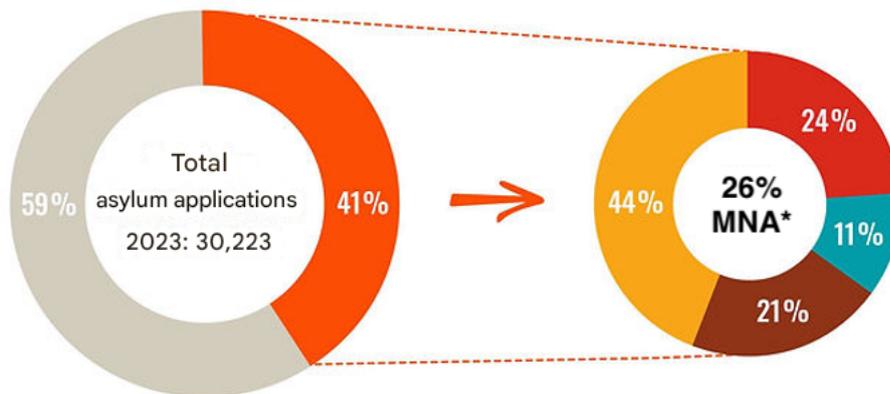
41% of asylum seekers are children or young people (12,466, 31% girls)

24% of children are newborns (2,983)

11% of children are between 0 and 5 years old (1,392)

59% of asylum seekers are adults (17,757, 28% women)

21% of children are between 6 and 13 years old (2,658)

44% of children are between 14 and 17 years old (5,433)

*Unaccompanied minors (3.271,4% girls)

In addition, 23.012 requests for protection (including 36% minors (8.336))

Save the Children

Source: State Secretariat for Migration (SEM)

According to the organization *Save The Children*, there are some elements still to be improved. They state, overcrowded asylum centers don't offer a good environment for children to play, study and meet local Swiss children.

These results suggest that there is indeed room to act in favor of the young migrant population.

2.2 Existing help structures for refugees

Fortunately for these young migrants, many associations step up to complete help given by the state. I researched these association's missions using websites and

interviews to identify the gaps or needs in the system and see what new kind of program could be pertinent. Here is an overview of my work. More information on what associations think of my own project idea can be found in this TM's annexes.

2.2.1. The EVAM

The EVAM [6] (*Établissement Vaudois d'Accueil aux Migrants*) is a state-linked institution based in the Canton de Vaud that aims to give autonomy and help to refugees. Some of the tasks they carry out include informing refugees about Swiss customs, managing asylum centers, partnering with municipalities and directing refugees towards associations and events in which they can take part. They also provide refugees with financial support.

When it comes to the promotion of contacts between the Swiss youth and the young refugees, the EVAM regional coordinator I interviewed said: "the civil society must take over on this point, the EVAM merely has the mission to help with lodging and basic assistance."

2.2.2. The PAIRES association

PAIRES [7] is an association that works in the Lausanne and the Yverdon regions and does three main types of activities: they supervise mentoring pairs, organize activities and give support classes.

This association gives a lot of independence to their mentoring pairs, while still suggesting activities, as the PAIRES's intern coordinator I interviewed says: "We often suggest our activities to mentoring pairs. However, they usually find other activities that match their common interests". The association rarely takes minors as mentors or tutors for responsibility reasons, since their mentors must guide refugees through their new life in Switzerland.

2.2.3. The Action Parrainages association

Action Parrainages was established in 2016 by a collaboration between the church and associations to manage big refugee arrivals and make sure integration standards are maintained. Its main activity is supervising mentoring pairs.

The refugees that take part in this program are often families with children or non-accompanied minors, whereas volunteers are often young retirees, families or teachers.

One of the program's challenges according to the association's member I interviewed is that mentors and mentees sometimes lack good communication and have different expectations from one another. For example, he mentions a time

when a mentor wanted to help someone too much, and that person felt "dispossessed of their life plan." It is therefore important to find the right balance in this kind of relationship.

2.2.4. The RYL! Association

At the start, RYL! (*Rock Your Life!*) [8] was created to support young students who make professional transitions. In 2022, it became specialized in proposing mentoring and activities to young refugees.

The association member I interviewed feels mentoring is a real "give and take relationship" between the mentor and the mentee, with "both sides benefiting" from it. They also turn to "universities and colleges that train social educators to find volunteers who already have the social aptitudes required". The mentoring lasts for one year.

2.3. Interview of refugees on their experience

Beyond existing programs to support refugees, I decided to interview both migrants and locals to see what else could help.

2.3.1 Contexts of departure and arrival

I interviewed six people who arrived in Switzerland within the last ten years as young refugees. They left Afghanistan, Ukraine, Iran or Eritrea for conflictual or political reasons, in search of a better future. Almost half of these migrants came here as unaccompanied minors. This is above the Swiss 2023 average (see chapter 2.1, page 9), which states that 26% of child refugees are non-accompanied minors. Five of them stayed or are staying in an asylum center (often in Ste-Croix).

2.3.2 Adaptation to a life in Switzerland

Despite having different experiences integrating into Switzerland, they all had challenges to face. Amongst these are difficulties finding a job, meeting with Swiss people or studying, but they mostly stated cultural clashes and learning the local language as the biggest obstacles to their adaptation.

Interestingly, three of them had positive mentoring experiences, one was welcomed by a host family and many of them were assisted by associations, which helped them along the way.

It is important to note that most interviewed refugees have never attended the Swiss public schooling, either because they were too old or wanted to start working as soon as possible.

Most interviewed refugees praise the well-organized support of the EVAM despite some minor complaints about wait times or frustration with administration. Many say the EVAM, and other State-linked agencies only provide the most basic of assistances and that joining associations like PAIRES or Action Parrainages was what really supported their integration to the Swiss population. These testimonies indicate that non-governmental help is essential for the success of refugee integration.

2.3.3 Feedback on my tutoring idea for young refugees

During these discussions, I put forward my youth-to-youth tutoring idea to get their feedback and suggestions. The importance of the classes being centered around mutual aid was one interesting aspect of the feedback. One refugee suggests that "When the tutors see a refugee who has arrived a couple of years ago and who is motivated to find success in this new country, it could motivate them to open to new cultures and make the most of their opportunities." The language was also presented as a central element of the classes, with one person saying: "We have eyes and ears, but not knowing the language is a real handicap. It is important to find volunteers to help with this.".

Furthermore, tutors being volunteers ensures that they have a certain degree of maturity, tact and understanding. The peer-to-peer aspect has also been approved of, with one person declaring: "I agree that the tutor should be about the same age as us, because it is harder to openly speak and have a proper relationship with an older person.".

This crucial information has comforted my project idea and my general picture of refugee integration.

2.4. Young Swiss residents and the refugee cause

It is interesting to consider the image the young Swiss population have of their immigration system. To test if the local youth would embrace my tutoring idea, I created a voluntary survey which included multiple choice and short answer questions. I posted it on social media, sent it to friends and relatives and had it sent to my high school's students by email. All charts and information shown below come from the Google Forms [5] survey I issued in June (which got 74 responses).

2.4.1 Profiles of the survey participants

About two thirds of the survey participants were aged from sixteen to eighteen years old, most of them (79.7%) (Gr.1) are high school students. Other participant profiles were university students, school-aged children and other study or working profiles. Furthermore, 81.2% of survey participants were women, and none of the participants were refugees.

<u>Gr.1</u>

What is your educational **profile?**

69 responses

- 🔵 schoolchild
- 🔴 high school student
- 🟠 university student
- 🟢 apprentice
- 🟣 other post-compulsory education
- 🔵 practicing a profession
- 🟣 other

79.7%

13%
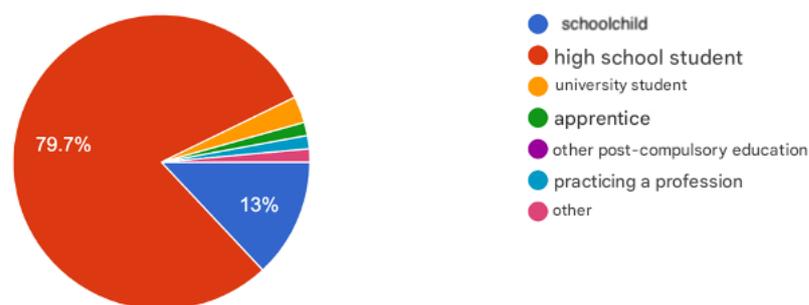
2.4.2 participant's views of refugees

Most survey participants have met refugees their own age, whose integration experiences vary widely. They often say that these people had difficulties with the new language and sometimes that they integrated quite easily. One participant said: "I know several people, and in general it is very difficult because they find it challenging to fit in."
Other survey participants don't know any refugees their own age, but most say they'd like to meet some.

81.4% of participants showed interest in the refugee cause and 79.6% were interested by my tutoring idea for refugees (see later). This suggests that today's Swiss youth are aware of and willing to help battle obstacles these migrants must face at their arrival in this country. Yet only 21.4% of participants (Gr.2) say that they had been offered to help refugees adapt to a new life in Switzerland, which isn't surprising given that the associations I have interviewed rarely accept young volunteers. (see chapter 2.2).

<u>Gr.2</u>

Have you ever been offered the opportunity to meet or help refugees your age integrate?
70 responses

yes
no
no, and it might have interested me

44.3%

34.3%   21.4%
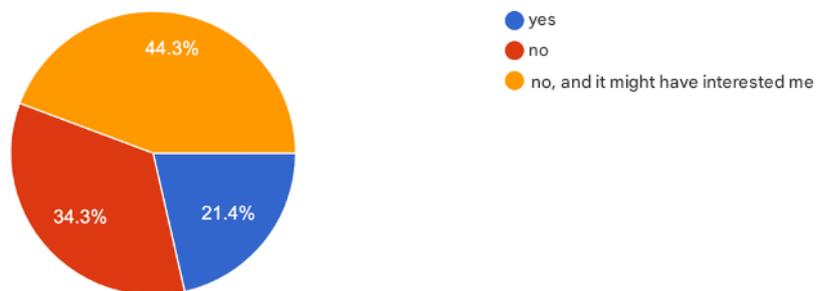
*2.4.3 participant's views of my tutoring idea for young refugees*

This idea was generally well received, with about 4 participants out of 5 saying that they might be interested in investing in such a project. One comment on the idea was: "The project is good, and I think it is easy to implement."
However, 26.7% of these interested participants (Gr.3) declare that they would need financial motivation to do so.
The other participants who weren't interested in the project mostly say that they wouldn't have time for such a commitment, and some say that they lack the will to commit.
Gr.3

If yes, would you consider doing it as a volunteer?
60 responses

Yes, I could do it as a volunteer
No, I would need financial motivation to invest in such a project

26.7%

73.3%
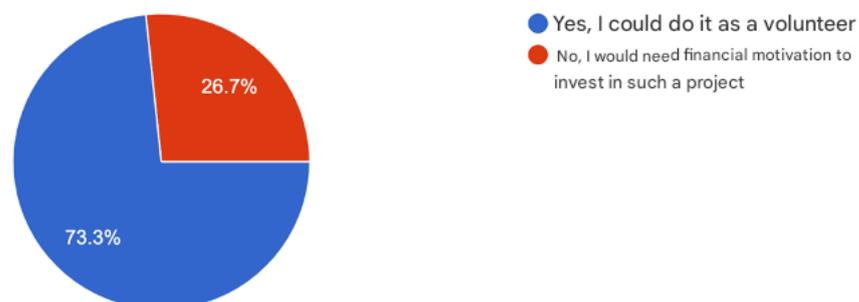
54.3% of participants have never done any tutoring before, and 27.1% think that experience in tutoring alone isn't enough to help and meet refugees.

Several elements were suggested to ensure the success of such a project, including "To be given a place to work, information on what to do, and an organization that manages this." Other suggestions were to guide tutors on sensitive issues and to

obtain state funding. Tolerance and understanding are important elements for some of the survey participants.

2.5. The awareness day

To present my tutoring project to gymnase students and get some direct feedback, I took part, with other people from the Humanitarian Aid TM, in the "awareness day" organized by our teacher. The aim of this event was to raise awareness on humanitarian issues amongst students in the gymnase.

To prepare for this day, I had designed two posters illustrating my TM topics and project, as well as a PowerPoint presentation. The event was held in my high school's auditorium, where we set up a couple of tables and billboards.

This was a very interesting experience; many people stopped by to ask questions or comment on my work, including a teacher, who told me that I am studying a "very good subject that reflects our reality." A high school student also said that "the youth have the will to get together, organize and help, but they don't really get the opportunity to get involved."

3. Conclusion on the Current Refugee Integration Situation

After researching the local refugee situation, I have found that Switzerland is quite a model in refugee integration and that the EVAM provides essential support to its beneficiaries.

However, some gaps in the system can be observed, and individual follow-ups are limited.

Non-governmental associations complement governmental services, fill in the gaps in the system and are critical in helping the refugees integrate Swiss society.

For younger migrants, who represent a considerable fraction of asylum seekers in Switzerland, spending time with young locals their age has many benefits. I believe cultural and peer-to-peer exchanges help create real bonds and support integration, as one interviewed refugee says: "To get used to Swiss culture, you need to have Swiss surroundings." Associations rarely encourage this type of approach.

Some young refugees can be reluctant to approach their Swiss peers. Similarly, most associations rarely accept young locals as mentors due to the responsibilities that come with this activity. Across my research, I haven't found a program aiming to integrate young refugees through interactions with the local teenage population, especially not a school-centered one.

Furthermore, the basic help that the school provides isn't always sufficient for many refugees, as brought up by one of the interviewed refugees : "I had to do a lot on my own, because all I had to help me at school were intensive French and German classes, but there was no help for other subjects like geography and history, which require a lot of comprehension.".

Volunteering could help ensure that program participants are dedicated, motivated and well-intentioned, as suggested by many association members as well as some survey participants. Thus, one of the young Swiss people who answered my survey said that a project needed "People who are genuinely motivated to help and who aren't just doing it for the money.".

The young Swiss population is generally interested in the refugee cause and would gladly support it if they could, often even as volunteers, as 73.3% of my survey's participants answered.

What then is stopping a peer-to-peer tutoring program for refugees from being created?

4. A Peer-to-peer Tutoring Project for Young Refugees

4.1. Concept of the program

To help refugees contact Swiss residents their own age and for locals to be able to exchange and meet with these migrants, I came up with the idea of a peer-to-peer tutoring program for young refugees. The plan was to start with a teaching basis, which would later evolve into a cultural interchange between the two young persons. Although many programs and activities as those provided by associations resemble my project, there are some new and interesting elements that are specific to youth-to-youth tutoring.

Young refugees might relate more to volunteers who are closer to their age. Thus, they may learn the language more easily and discover clubs and activities through them, promoting their integration. The small age gap between participants would mean that tutors know first-hand the challenges of the school system and classes.

Before testing the project, a place for the classes to be given must be found. It is likely that neither the tutor nor the refugee has access to an appropriate place to do the activity. Classrooms or town rooms could be a valid option, if available.
A one-day gathering of the tutors could be organized beforehand to hand out important information and advice.

4.2. Testing the program

I led a small pilot version of this tutoring project over the first months of the school year. Three tutoring pairs met once a week for six weeks, with group outings every three weeks.

4.2.1 Looking for volunteers

My first task was to find Swiss participants, while the EVAM kindly agreed to help find three refugees motivated to join this project. To this purpose, I printed and handed out flyers, sent emails to the student body and posted these flyers on social media.

I had trouble finding volunteers for my program. This surprised me, as many young people answering my survey seemed interested in my project. Some reasons I identified that could explain this discrepancy were the narrow population sample I contacted (I was looking for volunteer students in my high school for easier timetable planning), the heavy schoolwork load this population carries, the character of my project (pilot project, short-term) and last-minute issues some otherwise motivated people encountered.

I met with each of the Swiss volunteers before the first gathering to give them tips on how to get to know the young refugees, based on information given to me by Catherine Fournier. A copy of this is found in the annexes.

Each participant filled out a questionnaire with their personal information and what they expected to get from these classes. All refugees valued meeting Swiss people and learning French, while the Swiss volunteers mentioned getting to know people from different backgrounds.

4.2.2 The first four gatherings: their aim and how they turned out

I based my research on the first four gatherings of this peer-to-peer project, so that I had time to analyze it during the October holidays before handing in this TM's final version.

The aim of the first two meetings was to start off with an icebreaker game before presenting the project, introducing a set of rules, and playing a tutoring game in pairs. People were independent, and it led to good conversations, with what the refugees' level of French allowed (it could sometimes be necessary to switch to English)

I had the idea of going ice-skating for our third gathering, which was a first for some refugees. The ice-skating ring kindly gave us half price and free skates, and my teacher contributed to the second half. Despite two tutors not being able to skate because of injuries, this was a wonderful experience. It was great to bond outside of the school perimeters, and without a language focus.

The aim of the fourth gathering was to exchange and bond through game playing as a group and then in the usual pairs, I told the participants that they could bring their favorite board game.

4.3. The participants' feedback

After the fourth session I ended my research by sending an online feedback questionnaire to the participants.

Two people gave this experience a 4 out of 5 rating and the three others rated it 5 out of 5. The participants' favorite activity was by far the ice-skating outing, with one person preferring the first meeting to it.

This reflects the fact that most people preferred group gatherings to one-on-one exchanges and say it is "more interesting" to "be able to talk with everyone".

Participants managed to have good conversations with their partners, with one refugee saying "I really enjoyed meeting people who were different from me. It

allowed me to better understand other points of view and discover new ideas. These encounters taught me a lot and helped me grow, so yes, I feel enriched by it.".

The Swiss volunteers gave me some indications on what could be added for future projects like this one to make it more attractive to the Swiss youth. They all said that it would be more motivating if it was to take place during school hours, during the lunch break or as an optional school course, for example. Other comments were that the tutoring being remunerated, receiving an association-certified diploma or having prior training would encourage people to join such projects.

Some aspects could still be improved, according to certain refugees, who suggest speaking less fast or discussing future meetings in advance.

Finally, almost everyone said that they would recommend joining projects like this to their friends.

Reading these comments reassured me that my positive view of these first four gatherings has been shared by the other participants. I am happy to have pushed for this project to come to life, seen research being turned into experiences and been an active part of it.

5. Conclusion

Following this study, I am confident that peer-to-peer tutoring really could help young refugees integrate into Swiss society. Indeed, refugees connect easily with Swiss people their own age and through these meetings they can acquire Swiss youth language and culture. I also gathered enough positive feedback and information to prepare and test a successful integration program.

My objectives for this TM were to build an understanding of the refugee integration system and put forward ideas that could contribute to it. Encouraged by people's support and a collaboration offer by the EVAM, I decided to test my project over a six-week period.

My study has its limitations since I focused only on young refugee integration in the canton de Vaud. This topic could be extended to other cantons and complement other integration programs. My survey couldn't reach far beyond my personal network. Also, I was limited in time and resources for the testing of my tutoring idea.

To build on my project, two paths can be followed. The first idea would be to lead a specific school tutoring program for young refugees given by Swiss people of their age. In this case, tutors could be remunerated. The EVAM regional coordinator I interviewed suggests looking to the Bureau Cantonal pour l'Intégration des Etrangers et la Prévention du Racisme (BCI) to find such financial help. More schoolwork support is important and could be life-changing for some refugees, as shown in the interviews I led in chapter 2.3.

Alternatively, we could build a project centered around fun activities and exchanges between young refugees and their Swiss peers, which would be based on volunteering. To make this appeal to the Swiss youth, gatherings could take place in a high school, an association-certified diploma could be given to each participant or prior training to Swiss volunteers could be put in place.

Hopefully, my TM will inspire similar project in the future and raise awareness amongst my peers to demonstrate that interactions between young refugees and their Swiss peers is essential.

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   important-figures-at-a-glance/89565809

8. Annexes

8.1. An excerpt of my pre-project document

Thesis statement:

How could young residents of the canton de Vaud help child and teenage refugees with their integration and adaptation to Swiss society?

Context and analysis:

- General situation of refugees in the Canton de Vaud (statistics, articles...)
- Learn about existing structures for young refugees, analyze their efficiency (confronting them to the people concerned)

Note: I would have to interview refugees and existing integration structures to confront hypotheses with reality.

Hypotheses:

Young refugees experience:

- Difficulties with the language
- Difficulties adapting to the Swiss public school system.
- Difficulties understanding social codes and making friends

In forecast, possible solutions:

For example, tutoring program for young refugees, given by Swiss teenagers and young adults.

It could Help with language and schoolwork, making bonds with residents and possibly joining local associations (sports, cultural...).

I would have to address questions such as:

- Where would the tutoring classes take place?
- Would the tutors be volunteers or paid (by the state?).
- Should future tutors follow a course to be able to correctly deliver these particular support classes?

This would involve conducting interviews with schools, representants from existing structures, and surveying fellow students.

Project strengths:

- Appeals to ideal TM model, as it implies general research, interviews and analysis, and a wide range of possible solutions.
- TM that has a meaning and positively impacts our community.
- It may be necessary to partner with the EVAM to reach out to possible tutored refugees

8.2. Peer-to-peer tutoring program plan

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
W0							
W1							
W2							
W3							
W4							
W5							
(W6)							

Beforehand: Contact tutors (tell them about the information gathering date) and refugees (ask them what their expectations are from this program, and if they can get tips in a school subject, which one it would be)

Meetings: afternoons, once a week; at break time for the introduction gathering

Duration: 15-30 minutes, longer for outings

Week 0 *(15.09-21.09):*

⇒ One introduction gathering with the tutors to introduce them to the topic and give them tools to be ready to meet the refugees.
  ▪ To be able to deliver this, I must call a member of a mentoring association and ask for their advice on what future tutors should know.
  ▪ Ask tutors what their expectations for the project are, answer questions, make questionnaires.
⇒ If possible, organize first meeting between refugees and tutors this week.

Week 1 *(22.09-28.09):*

⇒ If it couldn't take place last week, organize first meeting this week: according to people's indications, prepare supervised courses so that tutors and

refugees can easily converse upon school subjects. Leave time for people to meet each other.

Week 2 *(29.09-5.10):*

⇒ Finish what had been started during the first meeting, prepare activities so that the pairs can get to know each other better.
⇒ Give first feedback questionnaire to fill in.

Week 3 *(6.10-12.10):*

⇒ Ask to hand back first feedback questionnaire.
⇒ Group outing (typically regional, interactive, group work, bonding), mustn't cost anything (much).

---October Holidays---

Week 4 *(27.10-2.11):*

⇒ "Moving away from bonding on work" → "game day": card/board games? Everyone (in pairs) suggests a game?
⇒ Give second feedback questionnaire to fill in.

Week 5 *(03.11-09.11):*

⇒ Ask to hand back second feedback questionnaire.
⇒ Free-planning meeting: the pairs can choose if they want to talk between themselves, do something as a group, play a card game…

Week 6 *(10.11-16.11):*

⇒ Last outing.
⇒ Final meeting, conclusion, open feedback.
⇒ Send last questionnaire to fill in online on Google Forms.

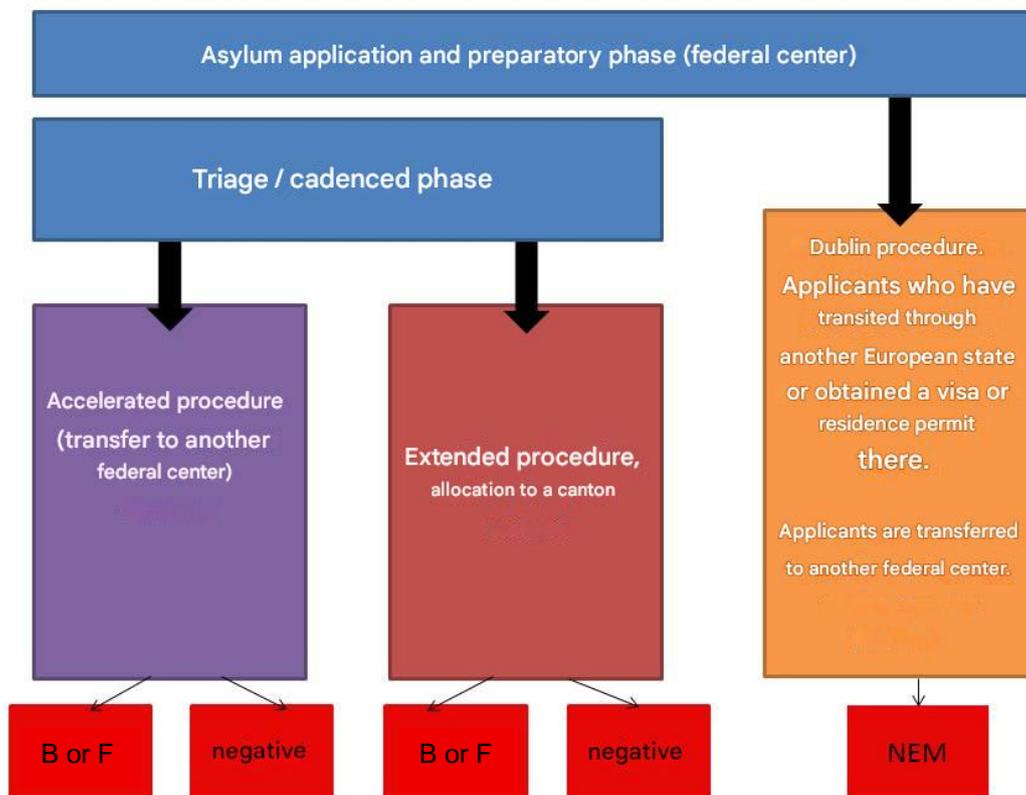8.3. The functioning of the asylum system

An application for asylum is any declaration made by a foreign person indicating that he or she is seeking, in Switzerland, protection from persecution. Without an asylum application there can be no asylum procedure.

All Asylum seekers are then transferred to a federal asylum center, where these applications are treated, and start to undergo the Dublin procedure (the Dublin Regulation determines which EU member state is responsible for the examination of an application for asylum), which means Switzerland may outsource the application to another "Dublin State" if it believes this State is responsible for it.

If Switzerland turns out to be responsible for it, the asylum seekers then undergo a series of interviews to examine their reasons for fleeing their country, and if the refugee status is clearly met or unmet, they receive an answer within a couple of days. This is known as the accelerated procedure. If it isn't clear whether refugee status is to be obtained or not, the asylum seekers then undergo the extended procedure to further evaluate their case, which can last up to a year.

In some specific cases, for example the people fleeing the war in Ukraine, some asylum seekers are granted the status of "S protection", which lets them obtain rapid and unbureaucratic protection in Switzerland, without going through an ordinary asylum procedure.

The illustration below gives a simplified, schematical version of the asylum system.

Freely adapted and translated from the refugee council's website: https://www.refugeecouncil.ch/topics/asylum-in-switzerland/the-asylum-procedure

Illustration source: https://www.guidesocial.ch/recherche/fiche/droit-d-asile-et-statut-de-refugie-90

<u>8.4. What interviewed associations thought of my project</u>

Advice from Action Parrainages:

Unless my idea exists already, The Action Parrainages representant says this project could work. He suggests that meeting up as a group and organizing activities could be two essential elements for the success of such a program.

Advice from the RYL! Association:

The RYL! Association thinks my idea could work, that it should be volunteer work and that schoolwork should also be done. The biggest challenge would be the motivation of the tutors; they should listen to the refugees and not force them to talk about their past.

The RYL! Representative says that the classes should be presented as mutual help and discovery, to attract refugees who wouldn't want to ask for help.

Advice from the PAIRES association:

They say this kind of program exists at university level, but it could be interesting to have it put in place at school level.

Advice from the EVAM:

Apparently, there is a need for such projects. The EVAM representative states that a young refugee recently came to him asking for a mentor, but the associations around Morges were submerged by mentoring demands and couldn't accept his request. He says: "since we have quite a few young refugees in the region, I think this could be interesting, as long as it is well managed.".

Finally, the EVAM member adds: "if ever you start an association, I would gladly be a contact person to steer refugees towards your program, as long as something doesn't exist already.". He adds that there should be some accompaniment and support for the tutoring pairs.

8.5. A document given to future tutors based on advice from C. Fournier (RYL!)

(not translated)

Rencontre pairs-à-pairs entre jeunes suisses et réfugiés

Conseils à destination de futurs volontaires habitués à la vie en Suisse

1. rappel du principe de l'activité

Durant ces six semaines, trois jeunes habitués à la vie en suisse feront la connaissance de trois jeunes réfugiés, aux parcours de vie différents. **Ceci est un projet-test**, servant de support à un **travail de maturité**. Ils apprendront à se connaitre par **pairs de deux**, à travers des **appuis scolaires** au tout départ, mais se changeant rapidement en une forme **d'échange à travers des jeux, des discussion**s...

Les participants se rejoindront en un **groupe toutes les trois semaines pour une sortie ludique dans la région**. Les participants rempliront un **formulaire de feedback** chaque deux semaines, et assisteront à un **bilan conclusif** en dernière semaine.

2. La communication

√ à faire :

- Parler d'une manière simple et claire, utiliser un langage imagé (donner des exemples pour illustrer ses propos)
- Ne pas avoir peur de demander si la personne a besoin de plus de précisions.
- Voir la personne en tant que jeune avant tout.

✗ à ne pas faire :

- Ne pas demander de manière insistante/minutieuse les détails du parcours de vie de la personne, ni quel est son permis ou son statut juridique, elle doit s'ouvrir d'elle-même, si elle le souhaite, sans se sentir forcée.
- Ne pas parler constamment de sa famille, sujet pouvant être douloureux pour certains réfugiés.
- Attention à la proximité : dire bonjour voir serrer la main, rien de plus.

3. Le cadre

Les rencontres, c'est libre, c'est cool, mais un cadre sera posé en première rencontre pour que ça se passe au mieux !