



PFR SIE-16630

# "Portalen (The Portal) – an entrance to energy"

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## Project information

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<b>Structure</b>	Norrköping
<b>Contact</b>	Synnöve Holmström <a href="mailto:synnove.holmstrom@telia.com">synnove.holmstrom@telia.com</a>
<b>Project title</b>	"Portalen (The Portal) – an entrance to energy"
<b>Project start date</b>	20/08/2017
<b>Project end date</b>	31/12/2019
<b>Project location</b>	Sweden
<b>External partner (NGOs, companies, local government, etc.)</b>	External partners are: Hyresbostäder, Norrköpings Kommun, Svenska Kyrkan, Migrationsverket, ABF, Marieborgs Folkhögskola, Rotary and Vinnova. (Bold letters = main cooperation partners)

## Programme objectives

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Economic empowerment  
Education  
Health (including water and food security)  
Violence against women and children

## The story of your project

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### Please summarise your project in some sentences:

The club has helped newly arrived women from different countries to understand and be a part of the Swedish society through social activities, language skill training.

### Why did your club / union choose to do this project?

We have worked for 2 ½ years in a project together with the municipal housing company in an initiative called Portalen. It started in 2017 when our Program leader came across the Portalen project and saw the potential for a co-operation in helping female newcomers.

22 of our sisters have spent more than 1200 working hours in activities meant to help approximately 125 women and some men to take their first important steps to be a part of our society.

In 2017 we started a discussion in our club on how to improve the situation among the huge number of newcomers to our city Norrköping. The proposal to join forces with Hyresbostäder (the municipal housing company) – for us to help and for the female newcomers to improve their lives – was put forward and the club said unanimous YES! We felt that we had the skills to help these women to be a real part of the society; Swedish language and culture, food, health and cooking etc .

**How did you implement this project? What concrete actions did you take to tackle the issue you mentioned in the previous question?**

In close co-operation with the administrative staff at the Portalen we chose activities and scheduled them in frequency and time suitable for both our sisters, the pupils to come and the access to available premises. It was the Portalen staff that picked the pupils and approached them with the offer to participate.

**Did you encounter any problems in organising or running your project?**

There has been very few problems. All thanks to a very close co-operation with the Portalen Staff. As soon as something has turned up we have had direct contact with them and immediate help to find a solution. Often cultural matters where they have been able to have a discussion with the participants and come to an understanding and agreement.

**How did you solve this problem? What did your club/union learn form solving these problems that you would like to share with others Soroptimists who might find themselves in the same situation?**

It is very difficult to start something like this on your own. Seek co-operation! Without an already well functioning activity like Portalen and with devoted staff we would never have reached so many newcomers with our mission to help women. During these years we have reached between 120-130 individuals in one or more of our different activities.

**Did the members of your club/union consider this project a success?**

Yes we believe we can say so. 22 of our sisters have been active in at least one activitiy, a handful have participated and contributed on a weekly basis. All have witnessed that it has given them as much as they have given the women. As a result of our work we also became a part in an ongoing development project with VINNOVA\*, which granted us 40 000 SEK from their budget.

\*Sweden's innovation agency, with the mission to help to build Sweden's innovation capacity, contributing to sustainable growth.

## **Project results**

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**Our project's main target were:**

Women

**How many people benefited from your project in total?**

120

**How much money did you raise?**

3'800 €

**How many hours have you spent to achieve this project?**

1'200

## **Supporting material**

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**Women's voices**

**Do you have a nice story or quote from a woman or girl who directly benefited from this project? If yes, please share it with us in the space below.**

No picture added because a majority of the women are Muslims and refuse to be photographed.

Women´s voices

A lot of laughter

“Oh, I did it!!!!” when an alphabetical woman wrote her first sentence on the white board

Another couple of young women from Syria approached one of our Swedish teaching sisters and said that now they had passed the exam in Swedish and planned to continue at University.