Refugees' opportunities and barriers in employment and training. DWP research report No 179

YHRMP ID
13
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Aims

The aim of the research was to determine whether the training and employment support for forced migrants who are eligible to work is sufficient and appropriate.

Methodology

The research combined a survey of 400 refugees and asylum seekers from the Somali regions, Iraq, Kosova, Sri Lanka and Turkey in five UK regions [including Yorkshire and Humber]; interviews in six UK cities [including Leeds and Sheffield], six focus groups with supporting agencies; and analysis of the

Labour Force Survey [LFS].

Key issues

The report addresses social aspects of life in the UK, pre-migration characteristics in terms of literacy and employment, English language and learning, employment and volunteering. Most respondents had been educated and many had previously held jobs in diverse areas of employment. The survey examined level of language skills on arrival and access to English classes once in the UK. Participation in training was very low despite a desire to participate in training. Levels of employment were very low, even when compared to LFS ethnic minority data. Diversity of employment was much more limited than pre-migration work experience and there was a lack of involvement in professional jobs. Employment was often in low skill jobs with poor terms and conditions and low pay. Methods of job seeking in Britain varied from those used in the country of origin and there were low levels of knowledge of statutory provision. Proficiency in English was linked to those likely to have been involved in volunteering.

Conclusions

Conclusions of the research relate to diversity of backgrounds and experiences among refugees; participation in education, training and the labour market; and the effects of language skills and information for access to employment.

Recommendations

The report offers detailed recommendations on employment, English language education and training, and for statutory, voluntary and community service provision. Areas for future research related to employment, training, language classes are outlined.

Migrant Group
Refugees
Topic
Work and education
Skills
Unemployment
Place
Leeds
Sheffield
South Yorkshire
West Yorkshire
Year
2002
Resource Type
Report
Publisher
Department for Work and Pensions
Published Location
Leeds

Source URL: *https://www.migrationyorkshire.org.uk/research-entry/refugees-opportunities-and-barriers-employment-and-training-dwp-research-report-no*