Integration? The perceptions and experiences of refugees in Yorkshire and the Humber

YHRMP ID
55
Author(s)
Dwyer, Peter

Aims

To explore refugees' understanding and experiences of integration, identify factors that may enhance or inhibit the process of refugees' integration and to allow the voices of refugees to inform understandings of integration.

Methodology

The research, to inform the Yorkshire and Humber Regional Migration Partnership's regional Integration Strategy for Refugees and Asylum seekers, draws on data from three focus groups with refugees.

Key issues

A background section briefly reviews approaches to integration and the policy context, identifying three routes to becoming a refugee. Three key issues from the focus groups were interactions with neighbours, activity in the paid labour market and contact with formal welfare agencies. The findings cover issues including perceptions of integration, feeling part of the local community, barriers to employment, and transition from asylum support to mainstream services.

Conclusions

Legislation that has excluded asylum seekers continues to have a negative impact on the integration of those granted refugee status. Despite many experiencing barriers to integration, refugees clearly value the opportunity to rebuild their lives in a new location free from persecution.

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