How can your business help refugees and other migrants into work

Did you know that refugees and other migrants offer a wide range of talents and experience which often go unnoticed due to various barriers and obstacles that they face?

We collaborate with many amazing partners and businesses across the region to help bridge the gap between refugees, migrants, and employers.

Some key facts about refugees and employment in the UK

- Only 51% of refugees are in employment compared with 73% of UK nationals [Ruiz, I and Vargas-Silva, C, 2018, and Dyssegaard, D, and Roldan, K C 2018].
- Refugees struggle, in particular, to find secure work that is compatible with their skills and education level.
- Refugees often work part-time, on zero hour or other precarious contracts and are at a higher risk of labour exploitation.
- UK employers are facing the worst labour and skills shortage since the late 90sWhat are the benefits of hiring refugees?

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Supporting refugees and other migrants into work offers you a range of business and commercial benefits:

- It can help develop a talent pipeline to fill vacancies.

- It can create a more diverse workforce that is likely to be more dynamic and innovative.
- It brings great opportunities for staff development, for example through buddy schemes and mentoring.
- Hiring refugees may also help ensure retention; a study of employers in the US, for example, showed that 73% reported a higher retention rate for their refugee employees [Dyssegaard, D, and Roldan, K C 2018].
- It helps meet corporate responsibility targets.
- It demonstrates commitment to being a value driven and inclusive organisation.
- It brings great opportunity for staff development.

Do refugees in the UK have the right to work?

Refugees, and those with similar legal statuses, such as humanitarian protection and discretionary leave, have the legal right to work in the UK.

All refugees should have a biometric residency permit which proves their right to work. After five years, nearly all gain indefinite leave to remain and then British citizenship. Refugees who have applied for indefinite leave still have the right to work, despite the fact that documents may need to be sent to the Home Office.

Further guidance is available through gov.uk:

- Employer Checking Service
- Right to work check: an employer’s guide

Hong Kong citizens

Hong Kong citizens’ right to work in the UK

EU, EEA and Swiss citizens

Right to work checks: EU, EEA and Swiss citizens

How can your business help?

There are many invaluable ways of supporting refugees and migrants into jobs, apart from employing people. These can include:

- Professional mentoring.
- Work placements and pre-employment training.
- Sector-based English language support.
- Addressing health issues that might affect access to employment.
- Giving recognition of existing skills and qualifications

Download our guide to refugee employment dynamics in Yorkshire and the Humber for more information.

DOC008-refugee-employment-dynamics-yh-info-guide-v10-acc.pdf

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