

SELF-EMPLOYMENT FOR MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES

The Right of Asylum in UK

The UK has received around 3% of all asylum claims made in the EU during the first nine months of 2016. The majority of the applications came from nationals of Iran , Eritrea, Iraq, Sudan, Pakistan and Syria. The asylum applications increased by 38% in the year ending March 2016.

The British asylum system is extremely tough. Just 28% of initial decisions made so far in 2016 have been grants of protection (asylum or humanitarian protection). Many refugees had to rely on the courts rather than the Government to provide them with the protection they need. The proportion of asylum appeals allowed so far this year increased to 43% compared with 33% for the same period last year.

Grant rates often vary between nationalities; for example, the grant rate for Iranian nationals was 46%, compared with 14% for Iraqi nationals.

In March 2016, 26,492 applications (received since April 2006) were pending a decision, 22% more than at the previous year.

In 2016, there were 2,811 enforced removals of people who had sought asylum. This figure is lower than the peak in 2004 and this long-term decrease reflects the lower number of asylum applications since 2002.

In 2015, European countries agreed to relocate 160,000 refugees away from Greece and Italy. In 2016, fewer than 8,000 refugees have been relocated. Britain has refused to help and has actually been sending people seeking asylum back to countries on Europe's borders, further adding to the chaos.

Today's statistics show that 650,000 people arrived in Britain in the year to June 2016 – but just 7% of them were seeking asylum in the UK.

Earlier this summer, the UN accused the Eritrean regime of committing crimes against humanity. It also clearly stated that Eritreans fleeing the country should be granted international protection. Yet the UK Government has consistently been failing to recognise Eritreans as refugees. This means that many are being forced to rely on the courts. In 2016

a startling 87% of refusals on Eritrean claims which are appealed are overturned by the courts. In October, a court forced the Government to update its guidance on Eritrea.

In 2016 1,667 people were granted humanitarian protection under the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme (VPRS). The number of Syrians who have sought asylum in Britain since the conflict began, stands at 10,247. That's just 0.2% of Syria's refugees. Like most of the world's refugees, very few Syrians come to Britain in their search for safety.

Preventive detention of refugees in Immigration Detention Centres is a largely utilised procedure in the UK and it can happen for any reason, such as to not be present at an appointment with a case worker. In the year ending September 2016, 29,762 people were staying in immigration detention centres; many of them were asylum seekers just waiting for their decision. The 43% were released back into the community after less than a month, rendering their detention pointless.

POLICES and PROCEDURES



The UK Border Agency receives and evaluates the protection claims made in the UK. Once a person has passed through the immigration control he or she must claim asylum at the offices of the Border Agency. If an asylum application is not made as soon as an asylum seeker enters, the person may be denied support and accommodation.

1. Screening and registration: The person seeking asylum firstly meet an immigration officer to tell about her/his case. The person will be photographed, have the fingerprints taken, have identity and origins checked and asked about the reasons to ask for asylum.

2. First reporting event and Caseworker Assignment: after the Screening and Registration, the application will be assigned to a Caseworker and the person seeking asylum will:

a) be given an application registration card or standard acknowledgment letter valid 2 months.

b) be detained.

3. Asylum interview: a second meeting with the assigned caseworker will be performed to make a first decision about the application. Other regular reporting meetings can be requested. It is possible to bring a legal representative but the interview will take place even if the applicant has no legal advisor. The applicant may be detained if failing to be present;

or be imprisoned just to wait for a decision.

4. Decision: the decisions taken by a case worker must be compatible with the guidance in the Home Office's published Asylum Policy Instructions. Officially the process is completed in less than 6 months maximum, in practice, this may take also years.

5. Appeal: There are three levels of legal appeal in case of failure:

I. The First Tier Tribunal evaluates the appealing claims within 2 months. An independent Immigration Judge hears the appeal and decides firstly if to allow this procedure; this may simply mean the Home Office has to reconsider its decision. If the appeal is allowed, a hearing can be asked and a new decision will be taken.

II. The Home Office may reconsider the entire application if the circumstances have changed since the first appeal.

III. If the appeal is lost and there's the possibility of legal mistakes with the tribunal's decision, it is possible to ask for an administrative appeal to the Upper Tribunal (Immigration and Asylum Chamber).

- The UK recognises three different permissions to stay in the country:

1. Permission to stay as a refugee: permission to stay in the UK for 5 years. This is known as 'leave to remain'. After 5 years, one can apply to settle in the UK.

2. Permission to stay for humanitarian reasons: even if not qualified for asylum, this permission recognises the need to stay in the UK for protection (valid for 5 years).

3. Permission to stay for other reasons: when not qualified for the first two permissions. How long this permission lasts is decided from case to case.

4. No reason to stay: when not qualified for asylum and the caseworker decides there's no reason to stay. The person will have to leave if doesn't appeal in the time allowed, or if the appeal is unsuccessful. The person can:

- a) leave by himself and get help with returning home
- b) be forced to leave – the person may be detained without warning at an immigration removal centre and then removed from the UK.

THE ASYLUM SUPPORT SYSTEM



Asylum seekers that are homeless or not able to buy food, can apply to the UK Border Agency for the Asylum Support, providing money or housing while they are waiting for a decision. At the end of 2016, 43,716 asylum seekers and their dependants were being supported by the Government. This figure has risen since 2012, but is still below the figure of 2003 when 80,123 asylum seekers were supported. The Asylum Support System can provide:

1. Accommodation: is provided on a no-choice basis. This could be in a flat, house, hostel or bed and breakfast. Financial support alone can be provided if the person does not need accommodation. Several NGOs reported that in the last years many asylum seekers and refugees have been resettled in poor and isolated areas. If the person refuses to be resettled, will lose the accommodation right.

2. Money: asylum seekers can collect money from a local post office each week. This is intended to pay for basic things only, like food, and toiletries. The amount is £36.95 for each person, around £5 a day.

3. Refused cases: asylum seekers do not continue to receive support after their application has been refused and their appeal rights exhausted. However, they can apply for a basic support package known as “hard case” or “Section 4” to receive accommodation and £35.39 on a payment card (the ‘Azure card’) which can only be used to buy basic products in specific supermarkets. In order to receive this support, the applicant must agree to return to their country of origin.

4. Mothers and Children: pregnant women or a mother of a child under 3 receive extra financial support: £300 maternity payment if the baby is due in 8 weeks or less, or if the baby is under 6 weeks; £250 if the person has been refused asylum. Children aged 5 to 17 must attend school.

5. Health Care: It is possible for an asylum seeker to get access to the National Health Service. The person can also ask for: free prescriptions, free dentist, free eyesight test and help to buy glasses. Data regarding the number of refugees and asylum seekers under the NHS is still not available.

DETENTION

The UK Government has the power to detain people who are seeking refuge. In the year ending September 2016, 29,762 people were imprisoned; among them many people just seeking asylum. Some nationalities are nearly always released from detention: 92% of Iranians were released. Asylum seekers can be detained for many reasons (as to verify their identity) or for no reasons (to place them waiting for a decision). The Home Office, in theory, excludes certain categories of asylum seekers from detention: children and their family, elderly, pregnant women, victims of trafficking, anyone able to provide evidence of torture, who is suffering from a mental or physical condition.

CHILDREN and UNDERAGE

Despite the Home Office excludes children from detention, the Government has locked up 68 children in 2016 despite its promise in 2010 to end the practice. Three quarters of the children were released, rendering their detention not only harmful but futile. Unaccompanied children, when not detained, are often held in facilities even less well equipped than detention to care for them, as reported in a recent parliamentary investigation.

Although there is a specific procedure for family reunification (which reduce the number of unaccompanied minors) called “the Mandate Scheme”, the Government has rarely used this route and just 4 people have arrived through it in 2016. Just 36 since the beginning of 2014. Of the children who arrived in Britain alone, just 29% (443) have been granted asylum in 2016. Instead, many separated children are granted short term leave to remain, which expires after just 2.5 years, leaving them with anxiety and uncertainty about their future.

It is common practice for UK local authorities to ask tribunal's permissions to rely on dental x-rays as a way to assess the age of children claiming asylum. However, a court has recently warned judges against over reliance on dental x-rays; in fact, there is not sufficient evidence that this method is a reliable way of determining a child's age and should not be used. The court found that it could be potentially useful with younger children, but could not verify whether or not someone is over or under the age of 18. The British Dental Association stated that testing young people's teeth to establish their age is immoral and ineffective.

CHARITY, NGOs and PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS

The British Government ensure basic support to the majority of the asylum seekers and refugees in the UK. However, it does not cover integration or educational projects such as language classes, IT learning or help to integrate within the new hosting society. These kind of activities are provided by charities, NGOs and other associations that deal with refugees and migrants. These realities are able to pursue their aim thanks to both private and public funding. They are often the last hope for those who lost all their appeals and benefits, but are still in the UK.

Also, charities and NGOs are fundamental to provide legal assistance to those asylum seekers that cannot pay to be represented in court.

THE EMERGENCY RESPONSE:

Britain, as the other European countries, has coped with the refugee crisis of the last years (started with the Arab Spring and the Syrian civil war) in a discordant manner, often not following the common guidelines on International Protection. Within its borders, Britain has increased the use of restrictive methods such as detention and expulsion. Outside its borders, it raised actions and interventions to avoid new arrivals, such as building refugee camps in other countries, enhancing the border patrols with France, or sending British officers in Greece to help rejecting more people. Moreover, the UK (and other European countries), has stipulated accords with some nations that represent migratory channels to enter in EU (such as Turkey, Sudan or Egypt); leaving the complex management of numbers of vulnerable people to those governments which have often proved to violate fundamental human rights. Consequently, asylum seekers are rejected before they can actually arrive in Europe. These collaboration between governments are actually in line with the EU directives to enhance the percentage of denials before and after they have arrived in Europe.

SCOTLAND, WALES AND NORTHERN IRELAND

At present, Scotland has a specific population growth policy relying on immigration. The Scotland 'shortage occupation list' gives employers greater scope to recruit non-EU migrants for some specific roles in Scotland. If Scotland votes for independence, it will have the

opportunity to define and extend its own immigration policy.

Wales has the oldest population in the UK, so it is likely that migrants will be particularly important for the provision of social care for this group. Despite initiatives by the authorities to provide effective information, migrants continue to rely mainly on informal networks for information or advice.

Northern Ireland: The Home Office does not collect figures specifically for Northern Ireland but the statistics from charities and some statutory organisations give a general picture. Most estimates put the number of asylum seekers in Northern Ireland at the moment at between 400 and 500. Concerns have been raised in terms of asylum seekers and refugees: disaggregated data on the refugee population are not reliable to better organise services; there are complications with the asylum process due to the specific situation of Northern Ireland; there is limited access to health care for unsuccessful asylum applicants; Treatment and safety of child asylum seekers is not granted; there's oversight of detention and removal facilities; integration of refugees in Northern Ireland in the absence of a Refugee Integration Strategy is not in process.

INTEGRATION POLICY

IMMIGRATION ACT 2016

The "Immigration act", introduced in 2016, focuses on illegal migration and punitive measures for those who don't 'play by the rules'. The key changes of the Act are:

- Employers who hire illegal migrants and the workers themselves face criminal sanctions.
- Migrants who do not have permission to be in the UK can have certain privileges revoked. For example, their bank accounts can be frozen and their driver's license can be seized.
- It will soon be a criminal offence for a landlord to knowingly rent premises to an illegal migrant. If found guilty, the landlord can face up to five years in prison. This law will take effect when the Secretary of State creates regulations that state the law's 'start date'.
- The Government's so-called 'deport first, appeal later' scheme has been extended to all migrants (before it only applied to convicted criminals with no residency rights or to those people the Secretary of State considered it 'conducive to the public good' to remove). Any migrant that has made a human rights or asylum claim can now be

removed to their home country pending the outcome of their appeal against the decision to remove them. That is, unless such removal would cause them 'serious, irreversible harm'. This law will also take effect when the Secretary of State creates regulations stating the law's 'start date'.

- Pregnant women can now only be detained by immigration authorities for up to 72 hours (or one week with special permission).
- Arrangements will be made to relocate unaccompanied refugee children from other countries in Europe to the UK

To sum up it brings with it major revisions of the immigration system and claims that "the government is again trying to clamp down on illegal migrants. But some of the new rules could create greater vulnerability for all migrants. As is usually the case with the ever-changing immigration law system, the results will be played out in the courts over the next few years."

Education

Immigrants in Britain are better educated than the natives, official statistics reveal, with more than half of all foreign-born residents in the UK educated to degree level. This is the highest proportion in Europe, with Ireland having the next highest share - at 44 per cent.

Of the total UK population, less than one in three people went through higher education, which ranks us seventh in Europe.

Moreover the UK has already played a significant role supporting the education of 250,000 children from Syria in formal and informal education.

Much of the international focus has been on the practical difficulties of delivering education, such as providing access to schooling, building temporary classrooms, and recruiting and training teachers. Refugees and asylum seekers need support to understand how life works in the UK, get to grips with the education system or just learn how to use the local library or transport system.

The UK will support a further 59,000 school places for Syrian refugees and vulnerable children in Lebanon while providing classes and support for thousands more who are out of school. Up to £20 million will be provided to support Lebanon's severely overstretched

school system and give children who have lost everything the chance of a better future. These investments will double Britain's planned investment in education in Lebanon over the next 3 years.

Over the next five years – to 2016 – 550,000 more school places will be needed as a direct and indirect result of migration, costing a further £40 billion, and over the next ten years – to 2020 – this rises to one million extra places at a total cost over ten years of almost £100 billion.

The three-year project is providing 3,100 disadvantaged young people with the necessary language and academic skills to meet the entry standards of tertiary education institutions, as well as providing accredited higher education distance learning online through the UK's Open University. The British Council is also providing funds to help Syrian scholars access English language qualifications with the Council for At Risk Academics (CARA), which provides temporary sanctuary in UK universities and research placements.

Moreover all around the UK there are a lot of possibilities to apply for scholarships sponsored by universities.

1. The University of Sheffield are pleased to offer five scholarships for those who have sought refuge in the UK. The scholarships cover the cost of tuition and provide a £9,840 award to support living costs for each year of study. The scholarships will be available for students studying undergraduate degrees or postgraduate masters courses. The aim is to support students under the government's resettlement programme or who are recent arrivals in the UK.
2. At University of Nottingham, students with refugee status in the UK will generally have home fee status and therefore be eligible for the same package of government and University support as other home students. However, in recognition of the additional challenges these students often face, the University of Nottingham has introduced the Maycock-Whileman Scholarship for 2016. This award offers £1,000 a year to home fee status students with refugee status in the UK who meet certain criteria. Students who are seeking asylum in the UK may not be eligible for home funding and therefore face a significant barrier to obtaining a University education.

BEST PRACTICES

The following programmes are three examples of best practices where support and mentorship for migrants and refugees are the result of a path of self-commitment and mutual comprehension.

1) ENTREPRENEUR VISA

The Department for International Trade's (DIT) Global Entrepreneur Programme (GEP) helps overseas entrepreneurs and early stage technology businesses or start-ups that want to relocate their business to the UK.

The programme has so far helped to:

- relocate 340 businesses to the UK
- create over 1000 jobs in the UK economy
- raise over £1 billion of private investment for companies

Support is free and includes:

- help to develop business plans
- assistance with relocating to the UK
- providing introductions to investors
- guidance on how to grow internationally
- mentoring from experienced entrepreneurs
- continued help once located in the UK

In return for this support, overseas entrepreneurs are encouraged to set up their headquarters in the UK

The UK Government hopes to lure entrepreneurs and investors to the country with new visa rules which will reward those who contribute to economic growth. Immigrants currently enter the UK under a range of visa categories, depending on their level of skills and likely financial

contribution. The level is assessed on a points-based system, where points are awarded for different attributes including previous or prospective salary and qualifications. Crucially the government has introduced an entirely new type of visa, created for "prospective entrepreneurs". They will be allowed to enter the UK to secure funding and start the process of setting up their business before they begin the traditional visa process. The idea is encourage start-ups from outside the EU to establish themselves in the UK with a much lower budget, with the view that the country would benefit from their subsequent growth. Also, from 6 April, 2011, the top visa category, tier one, will be restricted to just entrepreneurs, investors and the exceptionally talented. Those within the new tier one who fall into the "investor" category will be allowed to settle in the UK faster than the current five-year minimum requirement if they invest large sums of money. So those that inject £5m to the economy will be able to settle after three years and those who invest £10m or more will be able to settle after just two years. It's not just new arrivals who will be entitled to this "accelerated settlement" -- investors who are already in the UK will be able to benefit from the changes as well.

However, the government will make allowances for businesses with a lot of potential to come into the country with just £50,000 in funding, provided it comes from a reputable organisation. Increased flexibility means that the number of days that investors can spend outside of the UK has risen from 90 to 180, without impacting on their right to residency. This level of mobility is crucial for investors, who tend to need to travel a lot. The final type of tier one visa, which applies to "exceptional talent" does not require any investment or sponsorship, but is only open to those who have been recognised to have the potential to be recognised as leaders in the fields of science, arts and humanities. The changes are part of a considerable reform to the immigration system which aims to reduce net immigration. In a statement, Green said: "This Government is committed to reducing net migration in the UK to the tens of thousands. We review all routes of entry to the UK and implement a range of measures spanning all aspects of the immigration system." The legislation was drafted by Cambridge venture capitalist Alex van Someren, with the view to make the UK more attractive to entrepreneurs. He told Business Weekly: "We have beaten the American effort and that is fabulous news for UK entrepreneurship."

2) CLIMB:

In 2013 the Young Foundation and Metropolitan Migration Foundation Community Level Investment for Migrant Businesses (Climb) launched a new scheme to support migrant and refugee entrepreneurs.

It aims to support migrant entrepreneurs, from builders, cleaners and interpreters through to youth workers and community organisers.

Participants in Climb received one month of support to help grow their business, develop a business model and market it. The programme gave four social entrepreneurs the opportunity to pitch for a portion of £40,000 in funding available, as well as free support to help them grow their local business.

15 applicants were chosen for a four-week workshop which took them through the necessary steps to make them investment ready. They also received a year's worth of support including free venue space, access to personal mentors and other support tailored to their needs.

The CLIMB programme is the second social enterprise support programme being run in partnership with The Metropolitan Migration Foundation. The First Steps (in Social Enterprise) programme was launched at the end of last year for those who have always had the burning ambition to start up a social enterprise but are not quite sure how. The First Steps 12-week course addressed the business planning process working alongside a group of peer social enterprises.

The five winners, selected from over 40 applicants from across the UK, have won procurement contracts with Metropolitan, one-to-one mentoring from Metropolitan staff, and the opportunity to showcase their work in a pop-up shop.

While the social enterprise sector is flourishing in the UK, there has been limited involvement from migrant, refugee and ethnic minorities to date. Lack of access to credit and funding alongside religious, gender and language barriers all contribute to the problem.

Metropolitan Migration Foundation Director Paul Birtill said: "We see from our work that there are many great ideas in migrant communities that aren't yet making the social impact they could, and we are delighted to be working with them to realise their potential."

Sandra Ferguson Head of Community Regeneration at Metropolitan said "This initiative gave some great insights into the resilience of our communities. The excellent ideas generated by our entrepreneurs were as a result of hard work and recognising true potential. The

successful candidates had a real sense of how their business ideas could not only function financially but contribute to solving real problems affecting the lives of the people who live in our communities”

Margaret Ogebule, project lead at The Young Foundation said “The quality and vision of these social enterprises has been inspiring and we look forward to working with them over the coming months to strengthen and scale their organisations.”

3) TERN

The Entrepreneurial Refugee Network (TERN) is a new social enterprise which aims to enable refugees in the UK to actively participate in their local economies and communities by starting their own small- to medium-sized businesses. The main aim is to give help to refugees across the UK who have the ambition, the skills and the drive to succeed in setting up a business. You do not need to have a business plan or even necessarily a complete business idea but the desire to build your own business and the willingness to learn and to work hard. We recognise that there are specific challenges that you might be facing in starting your business and we want to help you overcome them.

Two key mission:

- i. To help refugees become self-sufficient through establishing their own enterprises
- ii. To transform public perceptions of refugees’ contributions to economies and communities

Refugees in the United Kingdom face a series of unique challenges when they attempt to start a business. These include:

Lack of Local Business Understanding

There is often a large gap between the bureaucratic requirements in the UK and those of the refugees’ countries of origin. This means that even entrepreneurs who have previous experience of starting and maintaining a business may be confused by the complex British requirements. The practical and legal challenges involved in this process often seem daunting.

TERN tackles this by matching refugees with a mentor who will meet with them once a week for 60-90 minutes and offer general support and advice. The entrepreneurs will also gain access to an expert panel which will consist of legal, accounting, and marketing experts. These will be available in a biweekly Q&A session and will answer specific, practical questions.

Financial Barriers

Refugee entrepreneurs often have a hard time accessing mainstream finance because the disruptive nature of their displacement means that they lack core business credentials such as local credit history.

TERN helps address this by developing refugee entrepreneurs' pitching and grant-writing skills. We also introduce refugee entrepreneurs to our network of funders, which includes organisations who will provide start-up loans to refugees who graduate from our programme. These loans will allow the entrepreneurs to build a credit history, enabling them to reach mainstream finance after a relatively short period of time.

Lack of Support Networks

A 2016 Red Cross report on destitution among refugees and asylum seekers stated that '18% of [participants in the study] did not have even one person close enough to them that they could be counted on to help or support them with serious problems.' Furthermore, even of those that did, 22% either had not or rarely felt close to others over the previous two weeks.

Such figures demonstrate that with the refugee diaspora spread right across the country, isolation becomes a serious issue for many of its individuals. This isolation prevents them engaging in wider processes of assimilation, rendering any attempts to engage in entrepreneurial activity impossible.

TERN looks to overcome this challenge by creating an extensive outreach campaign through our vast network of over 300 diaspora and community groups. We, as a network, are looking to draw together the many strands of the refugee support movement such that our support reaches those who need it most. Our outreach among these groups will include raising awareness about TERN and the possibilities it offers, as well as the promotion of the stories of the TERN Champions – our previously successful refugee entrepreneurs – which we hope will not only inspire other refugees in the UK, but begin influencing the wider public narrative around refugees.

The worth of integrating

The research provides an in-depth analysis of the net fiscal contribution of UK immigrants, drawing a distinction between immigrants from the 10 Central and East European EU member states that joined since 2004 (the A10), other European Economic Area (EEA) immigrants and non-EEA immigrants.

European immigrants who arrived in the UK since 2000 contributed more than £20bn to the economy between 2001 and 2011.

Not only that, they also rewarded the country with valuable human capital and vital skills that would have cost the UK £6.8bn in education. European immigrants are on average better educated than natives. According to findings published in The Economic Journal last year, European immigrants who arrived since 2000 are more likely to have a university degree than natives. In 2011, 25% of immigrants from A10 countries and 65% of those from EU-15 countries had a university degree while in comparison just 24% of natives were the same.

Its main findings are:

- The positive net fiscal contribution of recent immigrant cohorts (those arriving since 2000) from the A10 countries amounted to almost £5bn, while the net fiscal contributions of recent European immigrants from the rest of the EU totalled £15bn. Recent non-European immigrants' net contribution was likewise positive, at about £5bn. Over the same period, the net fiscal contribution of native UK born was negative, amounting to almost £617bn.
- Immigrants who arrived since 2000 were 43% less likely than natives to receive state benefits or tax credits. They were also 7% less likely to live in social housing.
- European immigrants who arrived since 2000 are on average better educated than natives (in 2011, 25% of immigrants from A10 countries and 62% of those from EU-15 countries had a university degree, while the comparable share is 24% among natives) and have higher employment rates (81% for A10, 70% for EU-15 and 70% for UK natives in 2011).
- The value of the education of immigrants in the UK labour market who arrived since 2000 and that has been paid for in the immigrants' origin countries amounts to £6.8bn over the period between 2000 and 2011. By contributing to 'pure' public

goods (such as defence or basic research), immigrants arriving since 2000 have saved the UK taxpayer an additional £8.5bn over the same period.

- Considering all immigrants who were living in the UK over the years between 1995 and 2011, a period over which the net fiscal contribution of natives was negative (and accumulated to about £591bn), EEA immigrants contributed 10% more than natives (in relative terms), while non-EEA immigrants' contributions were almost 9% lower. Over the same period from 1995 to 2011, immigrants who lived in the UK endowed the UK labour market with human capital that would have cost about £49bn if it were produced through the UK education system, and contributed about £82bn to fixed or 'pure' public goods.

Studies suggest that, if properly managed, migration can be beneficial not only to the country of origin but also to the destination country in terms of both economic development and cultural enrichment. In the destination countries, migrants can boost productivity and economic growth, and help alleviate rising demographic pressures. They are also likely to contribute to the economies of their countries of origin through remittances and by strengthening the local sets of skills.

To maximise the benefits of migration, it is of the utmost importance that migrants become fully integrated in their destination countries. Creating inclusive environments of tolerance and equal opportunities is essential in that regard. This is closely linked with the protection of basic human rights and involves providing unimpeded access for migrants and their families to adequate housing, the labour market, appropriate healthcare, and professional training and education, including language acquisition for non-native speakers.

Refugees are not all the same; they represent a diverse range of skills, abilities, personalities, demographics and vulnerabilities. Equally, the countries in which they seek asylum have very different cultural, social, economic and political dynamics. The extent to which refugees can be successfully integrated into host countries depends, in large part, on the convergence of these factors.

Positive outcomes for refugees and host societies can be generated through supportive institutional frameworks and investment in the resources required to support the integration of refugees, and to address and minimise the initial barriers they face. Investment must start early, be long-lasting and focus on key issues such as legal status (including by developing fast and efficient procedures to determine refugee status), swift access to employment and education, language support and adequate housing.

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