Promoting Successful Integration

Yorkshire & Humber Refugee Integration Strategy & Forum

Manchester, July 2022

Refugee Integration
Yorkshire and Humber

This project is co-funded by the European Union Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund. Making management of migration flows more efficient across the European Union.

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Background to the Regional Integration Strategy and Forum

- Liz Maddocks - Integration & Partnerships Officer, Migration Yorkshire

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Strategy Consultation

- Between June and July 2021, approximately 250 participants attended a series of 16 consultation workshops:
  - ❖ 10 thematic strategy workshops
  - ❖ 4 sub-regional workshops
  - ❖ 2 meetings with refugees
- The workshops covered a wide range of integration areas including economic, health & wellbeing, housing, community safety, refugee women, young people and the voluntary and community sector
- An online questionnaire was also circulated across the region until mid-October, to ensure as many interested individuals as possible were able to contribute.

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Strategy Vision

- During autumn 2021 a new strategy was drafted, based on the issues and priorities highlighted during the consultation process
- The vison of the new strategy is:

"Yorkshire & Humber is a region where refugees feel safe and welcome, rebuild their lives, fulfil their aspirations, and contribute to the social, economic and cultural life of the communities where they live"

- The strategy was launched in Spring 2022: https://www.migrationyorkshire.org.uk/news/making-connections-building-resilience

(accessible format also available online)

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Strategic Priority Areas & Themes

The Strategy identifies the following priority areas and themes for refugee integration in Yorkshire & Humber:

Priority Areas	Priority Themes
Housing & Environment	Language & Communication
Economic Integration	Information & Data
Health & Wellbeing	Service Planning & Provision
Community & Belonging	Voluntary & Community Sector
Families & Children	Participation

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Strategy Values

- The Strategy vision is complemented by a set of values that will inform all our refugee integration work in the region:

  - Welcome
  - Inclusion
  - Collaboration
  - Opportunity
  - Equality

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Forum

- The Refugee Integration Forum is a new strategic forum to promote refugee integration in the region and bring the strategy and action plan to life
- The Co-Chairs of the Forum are:-
  - Zahra Niazi, Strategic Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Lead, Bradford Council
  - Rawand Ahmed, Refugee & Migrant Participation Officer, Migration Yorkshire
- Over 40 leaders and key stakeholders were invited to become Forum members including LAs, VCS, Home Office, Employment, Education, Housing, Health & Wellbeing, Arts & Culture, Sport & Leisure, and those with lived experience as refugees
- Secretariat support for the Forum is being provided by Migration Yorkshire, at least until December 2022

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Forum

- The Forum meets quarterly - the first meeting was held online on 29th March and the second meeting took place in person in Bradford on 28th June.
- The objectives of the Forum are to:
  - Help develop a whole society approach to refugee integration in Yorkshire & Humber
  - Monitor and oversee the implementation of the Strategy and Action Plan
  - Raise awareness of current key priorities relating to refugee integration
  - Raise the profile of refugee integration in Yorkshire & Humber, across the region, and nationally
  - Ensure refugee voices are heard and reflected in integration work in the region

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Action Plan

- Finally, an Action Plan to support the strategy is currently being developed
- The aim is to develop a robust, comprehensive, and SMART Action Plan that will help deliver the strategic priorities for the region
- Please note, as there is no additional funding allocated specifically for new actions, the Action Plan will instead focus on capturing what is currently being delivered by existing services and projects across the region
- To support this, detailed information on refugee integration services currently being delivered in the region is being collected though a service/asset mapping exercise
- The Action Plan is due to be launched by Summer 2022

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The Role of the Forum in Promoting Successful Integration

- Zahra Niazi – Forum Co-Chair, Strategic Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Lead, Bradford Council

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Commitment towards Integration

- What does integration mean?
- Bradford district is one of five integration areas within the country, City of Sanctuary (from 2010) and Local Authority of Sanctuary (from 2022)
- Our place - demography and history of migration
- *Bradford for Everyone* programme of activity has included 80+ projects, campaigns and research with a focus on refugees and asylum seekers
- Connectivity and strengthen our combined offer across the region – such as Learn English

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Our ambitions as a Forum and progress to date

- Amplify voices of refugees and how we support the integration of refugees across our place
- An equal space for professionals and refugees
- Creating the infrastructure for the forum which can be sustainable
- Place based leadership and commitment towards cross-sector working, partnership and collaboration
- Building on what we already do – with deliberation
- Learning from others and sharing good practice.

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‘This Forum is so important – it’s what we need as refugees to build our lives here, to fulfil our dreams and to help others and give back to the community – it’s our second chance.’

‘As soon as I arrived here I couldn’t find the right spot, I feel there was a gap there and so it took me a really long, hard time to do what other people can do in maybe two years or one year’. **Gaida Dirar (Forum Member and City of Sanctuary Ambassador)**

I really like the Refugee Integration Strategy because in Public Health we look at the wider determinants of health…its important to live in a good standard of accommodation, have a good job, be able to access education and to be part of a community to ensure you have good health outcomes. **Cathie Railton (Forum Member and Programme Manager, Department of Health & Social Care)**

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Thank you!

Refugee Integration Yorkshire and Humber

www.migrationyorkshire.org.uk/integration

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