

About the Project

This paper is the first part of a twelve-month research project by The Foreign Policy Centre and the Employability Forum.

The aims of the project are:

- To reinvigorate the debate about immigration by also looking at integration.**
- To analyse the costs and benefits of integration.**
- To explore features of best practice from countries with established integration strategies.**
- To map out a compact for immigration that focuses on rights and responsibilities for both migrants and hosts.**
- To develop a set of indicators for measuring integration and a policy tool-kit for the different elements of the process.**

The programme was launched at a half-day conference with the Home Secretary, David Blunkett. Other speakers included Rosaline Frith- Director of Integration Branch with Citizenship and Immigration (Canada), Ella Kalsbeek- State Secretary of Justice (Netherlands), Lord Cairns (CDC Capital Partners), Ram Gidoomal (London Sustainability Exchange) and Will Hutton (The Industrial Society). If you would like to read their speeches please visit www.fpc.org.uk.

There has been an enormous amount of work done on this subject (please consult our reading list on page 30). This document seeks to avoid replicating specialist research and raise new issues for future debates.

About the organisations

The Foreign Policy Centre

The Foreign Policy Centre is an independent think tank committed to developing innovative thinking and effective solutions for our increasingly interdependent world. We aim to broaden perceptions of what foreign policy is, revitalise public debate about foreign policy goals and find new ways to get people involved. The Foreign Policy Centre publishes books and reports, organises high-profile conferences, public lectures and seminars, and runs major in-house research programmes on cross-cutting international issues. To learn more about The Foreign Policy Centre, please visit www.fpc.org.uk.

The Employability Forum

The Employability Forum was established following discussions with some of the key refugee agencies about the difficulties facing newcomers who were seeking to make use of their previous qualifications and experience. The Employability Forum identifies and researches the key issues facing newcomers to the UK: influences government policies, procedures and programmes; facilitates cooperation between voluntary agencies; develops effective networks of employers, professional bodies and voluntary agencies and promotes positive images of newcomers in the workplace. The Employability Forum is supported by a range of organisations including: Refugees into Jobs, RETAS, The Industrial Society, The Refugee Council, the Home Office, Reed Learning Plc and the Employment Service.

Migration, Integration and Citizenship

Lessons from around the world

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Introduction

Britain has not traditionally seen itself as an immigration country - in spite of the waves of migration which have defined our history, language and culture. But today we are suffering from the fact that we do not have a systematic framework for managing immigration and integration. The impassioned debate about immigration and asylum which dominates the media is a direct result on successive governments' failure to set out rational objectives against which they can be judged.

Most of the focus of that debate has been on the number and types of people who should be allowed in: how to encourage highly-skilled workers to come to the UK; how to cope with an over-burdened asylum system; how to stem the flow of Channel Tunnel stowaways or to keep a lid on those settling in the more prosperous urban centres of the Southeast. The need to maintain public support for the system has made it necessary for the government to push for refugee flows to be fairly distributed around the EU, and to design a system that is well administered. It has also meant that the reforms of the immigration system have so far focused on ensuring that it is well-managed and on introducing effective measures to control illegal working and illegal entry in the UK.

But because the immigration debate has centred so heavily on the bureaucratic process of admitting people into the country, much less consideration has been given to how migrants can become full members of society once they are given the right to remain - how, in other words, we promote their integration into the UK. And yet it is this area of the debate that will be the most crucial in securing our national goals: public acceptance of the immigration and asylum system, the advancement of our economic objectives by tapping the skills of migrants, and the maintenance of an inclusive and secure national identity built on core values and institutions. This is an area of politics where a relatively modest investment in financial terms can pay enormous dividends in the long-term. The return on an investment of a few million pounds on language tuition could dwarf the results we get from the tens of millions that we spend on reception centres.

The debate about integration is complicated by the fact that it has become polarised between people who favour assimilation and those who adhere to theories of multiculturalism developed in the 1970s to protect community rights. Integration can be an attempt to move beyond these models.

It is often presented as a one-way process: the need for a newcomer to learn the language, norms and customs of the host community. But for integration to work the host community also needs to play its part in the bargain by creating an open

and welcoming environment: providing language tuition; recognising qualifications and giving employment advice; making available classes on its political institutions, laws and values; giving political leadership and working with the public to fight racism and discrimination. Giving migrants access to work should be the central part of the integration process. It is not just an important way for migrants to put something back into society, it is central to their self-esteem, a critical way to build up social networks, learn the language and become embedded in local society.

It is perhaps inevitable that the debate about an issue so central to our national identity should be insular. But most industrialised countries are dealing with exactly the same issues: an increase in asylum applications; ageing populations and growing pressure on the welfare system; rising public discontent with the immigration and asylum system; and populations that are becoming more ethnically, religiously and culturally diverse. Of course the context and precise needs of each country will be different, but there are important lessons which can be seen to cut across cultural and historical differences.

Traditional immigration countries such as Canada and Australia, and a handful of European countries like the Netherlands, have developed sophisticated frameworks to integrate newcomers into society, economy and political life. They see immigration and citizenship as two sides of the same coin and devote considerable resources to giving new migrants access to language, employment opportunities and information about the norms and values of the country they settle in. And because systems have been in place, governments have been able to set targets, manage expectations, demonstrate results, co-ordinate policies and identify good practice. The absence of such a framework in the UK has meant that much of the debate has been based on misinformation; migrants have worked through a medley of local voluntary organisations, and we have very little idea of the pool of talent and needs which exist in the country.

This is a crucial moment to think about integration in a structured way in the UK. We are currently witnessing a major restructuring of government policy with the publication of a White Paper on Immigration and Nationality. The Home Office's 'Full and Equal Citizens' document also raised the prospect of a strategy for the integration of refugees into the UK. In recent months, we have seen the reform of the asylum system, including the dissolution of the voucher system, the reorganisation of the accommodation centres and the creation of specialised induction centres to house, feed and support newly arrived asylum seekers. Hard economic evidence and experiences from around the world have encouraged a growing receptiveness towards economic migration which has led to the announcement of the Highly Skilled Migrant Programme. This has been accompanied by an intensifying debate about citizenship and how it should be promoted. The government, for

example, will be introducing citizenship into the national curriculum in September 2002. The integration debate should form part of this wider debate on the promotion of citizenship for all.

This paper is designed to feed into this process by setting out some preliminary ideas which will inform our research project. Section 1 presents the dangers of the failure to develop a strategy for the integration of immigrants. Section 2 sets out a workable definition for integration based on three aspects: economic, social and political. Section 3 brings together the different elements of integration strategies in three countries: Canada, the Netherlands and Australia. It sets out instances of innovation from each of those countries. And the final section sets out the initial recommendations which will act as the basis for a larger report: it outlines a structure for what could be called a Compact for refugees - one which sets out the rights and responsibilities for both immigrants and the British government.

Section 1

The Case for Integration

The debate about immigration and asylum is - if anything - is going to get more intense as the numbers entering the country increase.

The latest government research shows that in the next decade net migration will account for 70 per cent of the overall population change. Immigration is set to grow with the creation of new legitimate channels of economic immigration into the UK: over the last two years the government doubled the number of work permits issued to just under 150,000. Asylum applications have also been on the rise: tripling between 1999 and 2000. 45,100 of them were accepted for permanent settlement in the year 2000. And in recent months we have witnessed the extremes people go to overcome the increasingly tight barriers we erect for them - the risks become more superhuman, people-smuggling is on the rise.

Clearly immigration into the UK is made up of a very diverse cross section of individuals, all of which have very different backgrounds and needs. The largest percentage of those arriving to work have come from the Old Commonwealth countries and the European Union. The largest number of refugees have come from Iraq, Sri Lanka, the former Yugoslavia, Iran and Afghanistan - all areas that have seen an escalation of internal conflict. There are many reasons for migration: family re-unification, work-related migration, study and asylum. A key distinction is between refugees who are granted leave to remain and migrants who come to the UK primarily for economic reasons. The needs of refugees fleeing persecution will be different and greater: language ability is likely to be less developed, cultural understanding more of an issue, family reunification a priority and special services such as medical and psychological treatment necessary.

However, the ultimate goals for all people coming to the UK need to be the same: to promote a sense of belonging, participation, and respect for values and the rule of law. We therefore need to recognise the need to build the frameworks to integrate newcomers into our society, our economy and our political life. The following section sets out some of the problems that we face owing to the fact that we do not have an integration strategy, and shows the need for clear objectives.

1. *A hardening of public views on asylum seekers, refugees and the immigration system*

Opinion polls show that - apart from gypsies and travellers - refugees and asylum seekers are the least popular group in our society (MORI 18 July 2000). According to the above-quoted poll, 80% of respondents feel that refugees come to Britain "because the state is soft on them". Almost two thirds think that "too much is done to help immigrants", and almost half think that Britain should "not take any more asylum seekers". Underlying these opinion polls is the sense that refugees are a "burden" on the country.

These attitudes both feed into and are re-enforced by a media which has plenty of experience of individual problems, but no access to data on the positive contribution of refugees and migrants to the country. A recent study of 161 local newspaper articles, for example, found that only 6% cited positive contributions by asylum seekers and refugees. Meanwhile, 15% of the stories dealt with crime offences involving newcomers, and 28% concerned housing and employment difficulties (Audit Commission / Refugee Council).

Even though the government has been careful in recent months to avoid the rhetoric of "bogus asylum seekers", there has been no concerted effort to manage public opinion, encourage openness and inform the public about why people come here, and the benefits of economic migration.

The hardening of public opinion puts the whole system at risk and could stop us achieving our economic goals by making it more difficult to import skills, as well as putting pressure on our international obligations. But hostile public opinion and racism can also act as a crippling barrier to integration in the community and in the job market. This is important because discrimination continues to be a major obstacle to integration. Academic studies have shown that ethnic penalties still exist in the UK job market: discrimination in hiring has probably not declined much over time, prejudice among small employers is particularly acute, audit studies show that even UK-born Indians, Black Caribbeans and Pakistanis face discrimination.

2. *The failure to establish formal channels to reach into the pool of skills in immigrant and refugee communities*

At 3.9% the UK already has the lowest unemployment rate in Europe and Gordon Brown has declared that there are approximately one million unfilled jobs in the UK. According to UN statistics, we will need 83,000 more workers in a year just to keep the working-age population at a constant. According to the BBC, "Literacy,

numeracy and skills levels in the UK are so poor that a quarter of employers struggle to fill job vacancies". Farmers, restaurants and hotels, IT firms, hospitals, schools and manual industries all report skills shortages (see box).

There have been positive measures to relax the rules on economic migration, but paradoxically there have been fewer attempts to tap into the skills of people who have already settled in the UK. On the whole, refugees finding their way around the UK job market are left to their own devices. They are notified by post that they have been awarded leave to remain, but are given no information about the closest job centre, how the skills that they had at home will translate in the UK or how to present their CVs to prospective employers. Language skills are key to enabling integration, according to the Department for Education and Employment (DfEE) figures, 1.5 million people still need to improve their language skills to participate in employment, education and society. But language tuition, where available, does not respond to individual needs, classes fail to take into account the working patterns of their clients and schemes are not tailored to the age, profession and needs of each individual.

There is very little reliable data about the skills and employment of refugees, but the statistics that do exist paint a bleak picture. According to Home Office research, in 1995, 70% of refugees were unemployed, even though two thirds had held jobs in their country of origin. More worryingly, among the most highly skilled, 60% of those refugees who had worked as managers and trained professionals at home, only 14% had a regular job in the UK. A Peabody Trust report states that "only after 8 years was there clear evidence of success in finding jobs. By that time, about half found work in their field".

This is despite the fact that the majority of people who apply for refugee status are young and keen to find work. In 2000, approximately two thirds of applicants were aged between 21 and 34. Only 5 per cent were older than 50. As Tom Steinberg states in a recent paper, "Most migrants come from a self-selected group of usually motivated and organised individuals. People who are idle and disorganised are unlikely to go through the troublesome, expensive and exhausting procedures to migrate". Among refugees in particular, one finds unusually high levels of skilled professionals, a group most readily targeted by repressive regimes. There is considerable anecdotal evidence of refugees with professional qualifications doing low-skilled jobs in the construction, security and cleaning industries.

The National Health Service: The largest employer in the country, has recruited doctors and nurses from abroad for many decades. Today one third of doctors and nurses in inner London have not been trained here.

Catering: 70% of catering jobs in London are filled by migrants and 40% of hospitality firms reported recruitment difficulties in 2000.

Education: According to the School Teachers Review Body, schools in England and Wales will need to recruit 10,000 more teachers in the next 4 years.

Higher Education: Non-British nationals made up 12.5 % of academic and research staff according to the higher education statistics agency.

IT: The IT industry will need to recruit 540,000 people between 1998 and 2009.

Work can be the central pillar of integration. In the words of Margaret Hodge, "Employment has a key role to play in the integration process. Jobs help people to feel more secure and accepted - and enable them to contribute to the wider society again". Beyond helping to plug skills shortages, work can be a tool to manage public opinion, helping dispel the myths of "scrounging refugees". Although the system is rightly criticised for the regressive aspects of its citizenship laws, the German experience is an illuminating indication that labour market policies are a key aspect in integration. Research by Andrew Geddes shows that in spite of the fact that immigrants into Germany are not given any benefits they have fared better than many who have gone to countries with established integration schemes because they have been given easy access to the labour market. They have been encouraged to take an active role in work councils and in the apprenticeship schemes designed to combat overall unemployment rates. Ironically Germany has a smaller gap between employment rates of German-born individuals and migrants from other countries. The unemployment figure of migrants stands at 15%, compared to 23.5% in the Netherlands.

3. *The problems of the asylum system*

Unfortunately many of the processes of the asylum system have a negative impact on our ability to follow an integration strategy for refugees. Recent government

reviews have taken some of these problems into account. However, the following section shows that some of the systems put in place to curb illegal asylum applications exacerbate the exclusion of refugees.

The way in which asylum seekers are greeted on arrival - the lack of guidance, the hostility of the proceedings - stymies the integration process from day one. Furthermore, after the process has been completed and leave to remain has been granted, very little is done to inspire a sense of belonging among refugees. The paperwork involved in the process is indicative of how much we fail to aid the integration of refugees into the UK. When people are given the right to remain they are sent the "SAL1" letter. This document plays a similar role as the American Green Card but it is written in cold and bureaucratic language; it gives no indication of where to go for information or career advice, and, above all, it is not a recognisable document that potential employers can trust as a sign that job applicants are allowed to work.

The National Asylum Support System (NASS) which provides accommodation for refugees presents similar problems. The housing that is offered is only outside London and the South-East, and asylum seekers have no choice over their destination. This policy, commonly referred to as dispersal, has heightened exclusion because most asylum seekers have been resettled in deprived areas where there are few job prospects and where racial tensions are great. The lack of consultation also has the effect of disempowering and isolating refugees from the outset. Little consideration is given to whether individuals are being sent to areas where there are other members of their country of origin who can provide the support networks that migrants use.

4. *Information gap*

The lack of an official and co-ordinated integration policy means that there is no real data on how newcomers are faring in the UK economy and how they are coping in UK society.

The lack of data both harms individuals and stops government from improving its policy tools. Data banks on skills and qualifications would make it easier for employers to tap into the refugees' skill-base. And data on what works would also be a means of reducing wastage and enabling the transfer of good practice. Above all, data could help to turn around the hostilities in public perceptions. Hard evidence about how for example, the contribution made by migrants outweighs the costs of the asylum system, would help to manage people's perceptions about the reasons why migrants arrive in the UK and how they fare once they are here.

Some schemes are being set up including a new skills and qualification data bank of asylum seekers passing through induction centres. This is a welcome development which could be replicated in other sectors. But before embarking on such measures, it is important to set out exactly how the success or failure of integration strategies should be measured. The next section examines some of the basic principles of integration.

Section 2

Defining Integration

The immigration debate is often trapped in a fruitless conflict between those who favour "assimilation" (the duty of newcomers to adapt to the values, culture and norms of the 'host society') and those who advocate an approach based on "multiculturalism" (a framework which protects the rights of different ethnic or religious groups). The concept of "integration" could allow us to move beyond the poles of multiculturalism and assimilation and to develop a unifying narrative based on the opportunity to participate in a society which is built around certain rights and responsibilities and which in this way emphasises the ties that bind us.

The aim should be to move beyond current recriminations around "linguistic and cultural imperialism" do very little to help us develop solutions to enable newcomers to play a full role in the economy and society. This became all too evident in the aftermath of David Blunkett's announcement for newcomers to be given "compulsory language classes" and to "pledge allegiance to British values". The uproar which followed masked the fact that most people who come to Britain are attracted by those very things: the English language and the democratic culture. In this way it thwarted what could have been a positive statement of the UK government's desire to develop an inclusive notion of Britishness which people from all backgrounds could feel part of and a determination to give people access to the English language.

The first step will be to set out some guiding principles for integration.

Firstly, integration should be viewed as a process rather than a static goal. Although citizenship ceremonies and oaths of allegiance can be a positive way of marking an individual's acceptance into society, the integration of an individual can take many years, if not generations, as individuals and communities may be "integrated" in some aspects of life but not in others.

Secondly, it is important to recognise that integration is not simply a process of adapting newcomers to a host society: learning its language, laws, norms and culture. Any society that receives new members is also changed in the process, willingly or unwillingly. People and institutions therefore have an active role in the process: they have the responsibility to open society up to new members and to offer them the opportunity to contribute the resources they bring with them fair almost as well as white British men in the job market, Bangladeshi men are less successful.

Finally, definitions of integration need to take into account debates about citizenship and permanent residence. A focus on citizenship should not lead to the exclusion of those whose stay in the UK may only be temporary. Integration programmes should reach out to the economic migrants and refugees who may want - at some point - to return to their countries of origin.

In order to move beyond an abstract debate about identity it is helpful to try to define the different elements of integration which any strategy should seek to address. Sociologists have identified the following elements:

(a) Language. Speaking the language of the host society is clearly fundamental to participation in that community and its economy. Many refugees and some immigrants arrive with limited knowledge of English. While they learn the new language they may benefit from services in their own language and services of interpretation as a bridge to the wider community.

(b) Access to employment. Entry into the job market is for most newcomers one of the most important steps towards integration - offering financial independence, an opportunity to contribute and access to a network of social contacts. In Canada, for example, they have found that skilled migrants integrate more quickly than unskilled workers. But even the highly skilled are experiencing problems. Immigrants with university degrees, for example, take as long as 9-10 years to earn as much as Canadian born citizens with university degrees.

(c) Cultural orientation. Newcomers must learn their way around the culture of the host society, with its values and patterns of relationship and behaviour. The host society, in turn, needs to learn sensitivity towards the values inherent in the cultures that newcomers bring with them.

(d) Recognition of qualifications and experience. In order for newcomers to contribute professional skills and learning, their qualifications and experience must be recognised. But newcomers also bring with them a whole range of other skills (for example in the arts or in community leadership) and adjustments are required to enable them to contribute these skills to society.

(e) Social networks. Experience shows that newcomers can use established social networks as an initial stepping stone to integration. Ideally with time, these networks should become increasingly diverse. This is particularly important when it comes to gaining access to the labour market. Sociologist Anthony Heath has applied the principles of social capital to economic integration, for example. He has found that while bonding social capital (having social networks within a certain

community) is helpful to give people access to self-employment - bridging social capital (having networks across communities) is necessary for access to white collar or professional work.

(f) Political engagement. Participation in political movements, involvement in community-level organisation, voting patterns (when eligible) are all clear indications of the extent to which newcomers are engaging with society and keen to participate within its structures.

It is important that an integration strategy takes all these complex facts into account and that these are developed into an index which can be measured.

Section 3

Case studies

Increasingly, industrialised countries are facing similar challenges and can learn from each others' experiences. This section explores the integration strategies which Australia, Canada and the Netherlands have put in place to respond to these challenges and offers a range of policy ideas (see Table on page 21). These countries have been chosen because they all have managed integration strategies and have sought to address the challenges posed in Section 1 in a co-ordinated manner. While Australia and Canada are big countries which have managed migration for several decades, the Netherlands has been chosen because it is one of the most diverse countries in the European Union with one of the most comprehensive set of integration policies.

It is important to note that none of these countries are panaceas. Furthermore, all of them have differing traditions and different interpretations of what integration means. In all these cases infrastructure and political culture, the conditions of the labour market and the shape of institutions have real implications for the types of policies that are implemented, and their priorities. For example while generous to legal refugees and migrants, Canada and Australia emphasise the importance of selection when it comes to economic migration and are extremely tough on illegal entrants and unfounded asylum claims. The Netherlands has a sophisticated approach to deal with refugees but has yet to develop a framework for economic migration. All of these countries stress the fact that for an immigration strategy to secure public support, it needs to be well-managed and tough on irregularities. While opinion polls in all these countries show hostility to asylum seekers, none have problems on the same scale as the UK.

Australia

Australia has a much higher percentage of foreign-born people than most industrialised countries. 25% of Australians were born abroad, compared to 16% of Canadians. Those born overseas, or with at least one parent born overseas, now account for 40% of its population. In the post-war period Australia has accepted over 5.6 million immigrants. Australia sees immigration and settlement as two central components of its "nation-building" project.

Australia has operated a managed migration programme for over 50 years. The Department for Immigration and Multicultural Affairs co-ordinates the National

Integrated Settlement Strategy. The rationale behind this strategy is that in order to maintain public support for the immigration system and community harmony, immigration and settlement must be seen to be well managed and to serve the national economic interest. The government supports an active migration programme recruiting skilled individuals from around the world. Between 2001 and 2002, the Australian international recruitment programme will provide some 53,000 highly skilled people.

Tough selection criteria also apply to Australia's humanitarian programmes. Australia has a planned resettlement programme for refugees, established to contribute to "the nation's long term prosperity". The selection criteria for refugees encompass skills, language ability, age, and qualifications, and people are awarded the right to remain according to their ability to meet the criteria of the day. The current humanitarian programme has an annual quota of 12,000 refugees.

All refugees are eligible for immediate access to income support and healthcare, as well as counselling. The government also provides grants to ethnic and other community organisations to establish and manage services helping migrants to settle in.

AMEP - refugees in Australia are legally entitled to 510 hours of English-language training through the Adult Migrant English Programme (AMEP), one of the most extensive language training campaigns for immigrants in the world. Language training is compulsory and to date the programme has served 1.6 million migrants. The scheme provides tailor-made facilities, including home study, distance-learning and night lessons. Child care for mothers attending English classes is also provided.

Longitudinal Study - a comprehensive study of different cohorts of immigrants designed to track their progress. Surveys take place over 2 years and have so far monitored 11,000 migrants. Areas include: progress in linguistic ability, satisfaction with life in Australia and employment. Figures show that the Australian economy has experienced an overall 'brain gain'. Through migration, immigrants contribute \$56.1 million more to the Australian state than is spent on services for refugees and newcomers.

Canada

Canada promotes itself as a country of migration where newcomers have been vital to its social, economic and cultural development. By 2031, all population growth in Canada will be due to immigration. In the 1990s, 2.2 million immigrants

landed in Canada compared to 1.2 million during the 1980s.

The Canadian government supports businesses that seek skilled foreign workers and has created a simple and efficient work permit system. Both Canada's economic migration and humanitarian programmes are selection based. A points system based on specific criteria (including linguistic ability, qualifications and education) acts as a screening mechanism for all economic migrants.

Since the Immigration Act of 1976, the Canadian Resettlement Programme has selected refugees from abroad. Specific programmes such as the Urgent Protection Pilot Project (a fast-track scheme aimed at refugees from high risk situations) and Women at Risk (a programme that specifically targets women applicants) target those who would not qualify.

Canada's resettlement programme is set according to pre-established quotas, which at present lie between 20,000 and 30,000. In 1998, 22,644 refugees became permanent residents of Canada. Roughly half of these refugees are selected abroad for resettlement in Canada; the rest are claimants who arrived in Canada.

The promotion of diversity and multiculturalism is the guiding principle of Canada's integration programme. In 1971, Canada was the first country in the world to adopt multiculturalism as an official policy. As part of its official integration strategy, Canada specifically promotes "ethnocultural diversity", as opposed to cultural assimilation. Integration programmes are therefore aimed at immigrants within their "ethnic communities".

The Canadian government takes a very active role in promoting citizenship among newcomers. This is important because those who are granted the right to remain are expected to assume full Canadian citizenship after an average of 3 years. Citizenship week takes place once a year, newcomers are both taught and examined on the rights and responsibilities of Canadian citizens and citizenship ceremonies take place. Teaching material on citizenship is available to all newcomers and people are instructed on the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, voting procedures, the political system and the intrinsic values of Canadian society.

Canada's immigration programme is driven by an autonomous government organisation, Citizenship and Immigration Canada which manages a selection of services:

The Private Sponsorship Scheme - sponsoring groups - families, local communities, faith groups - can commit to providing sponsored refugees with basic assistance in the form of accommodation, clothing, food and settlement assistance for up to twelve months or until the sponsored refugees become self-sufficient. Canada also has a "blended" scheme in which the financial responsibility for resettling refugees is shared between the Government and the sponsor, allowing those to enter the scheme who would not otherwise be in a position to take on the financial obligation. The immigration service is responsible for matching those who have been awarded refugee status with suitable sponsors. To qualify to sponsor refugees, a group of five or more citizens must sign a formal agreement with the government. They have to give reasons why they are interested in taking on the role, and have to live in the community where the refugees are expected to settle. They also have to complete a settlement plan outlining the settlement arrangements put in place for the sponsoring refugees, such as finding suitable housing for them, helping them to learn an official language, get a job, make friends, and learn about culture and values and services to the community.

The Host or 'buddy' programme - matches new arrivals with Canadian individuals as well as representatives from non-profit groups, businesses and educational organisations. Their role is to welcome them, introduce them to services in their community and help them "overcome the stress of moving into a new community". Hosts also help provide services, give the opportunity to practice English or French, help newcomers establish contacts in the work place, make friends and learn about the Canadian way of life. Community organisations receive funds to recruit, train, match and monitor volunteers who serve as hosts.

Research and monitoring - statistics on migrants and records how migrants are faring. Attitudes towards immigration are also frequently analysed and regular surveys test the value of different campaigns. Indicators show, for example, that overall immigrants have almost the same unemployment rates as people born in Canada. In 1999, 10.2% of immigrants were unemployed compared to 10.1% Canadian born. Public opinion is also closely monitored and the results are used to measure the success rates of managed schemes. For example, while 42% of Canadians still feel that there are too many migrants in Canada, eight in ten Canadians agree that Canada's diverse cultural make-up is "one of the best things about this country" (Angus Reid 1996-98).

The Netherlands

The Netherlands is a small, relatively cohesive country with a strong national identity. Compared to Canada and Australia it is a "new immigration country". But it is also one of the most diverse countries in Europe. 17% of Dutch people were nei-

ther born in the Netherlands nor have parents born in the Netherlands. In 1998, 82,000 people arrived in the Netherlands, the same amount of people that arrived in the UK that year.

The Netherlands currently has no formal skilled migrant programme. However, together with the Scandinavian countries, the Netherlands stands out among European countries as the only one to have a well-established and co-ordinated integration strategy for newcomers, dating back to 1983.

Since the late 1980s the Dutch programme has moved away from policies emphasising multiculturalism and cultural affirmation towards an approach that promotes empowerment and participation in Dutch society. The system highlights the rights and responsibilities of all people living in the Netherlands. Newcomers are therefore expected to comply with the fundamental values of Dutch society-, which the government defines as “the democratic rule of law”, “freedom of speech” and “the equality of men and women”. The Dutch programme stands out for positive impact which it has had on public opinion. Only 17% of Dutch people object to the presence of refugees in their borders compared to 50% in the UK.

Notable programmes in Holland include:

The Integration of Newcomers Act - Introduced in 1998, this programme is based around a contract between newcomers and the Dutch State. The agreement stipulates, for example, that all newcomers have the right to 600 hours of Dutch language lessons, familiarisation with Dutch society and professional orientation. In return, newcomers must sign a contract agreeing that they will take full advantage of these services. If not they lose the provisional benefits they are entitled to.

Targeting and engaging employers - a decade ago the Dutch government introduced a set of targeted policies designed to tackle the high rates of unemployment among ethnic minorities. In 1998 the average unemployment figures of ethnic minorities was 16%, while unemployment among indigenous Dutch people stood at 4%. As part of the scheme the Dutch government set itself the ambitious aim of halving this figure by 2000. One of the main goals of this targeted scheme was to engage employers in the integration process while helping alleviate the skills shortages which some sectors, namely small and medium sized enterprises, were experiencing. The government signed a covenant with the Dutch organisation of SMEs committing them to open vacancies to migrants and people from ethnic minorities. This targeted scheme has proved extremely successful and has exceeded the targets set by the government. By 2000 the unemployment rate of ethnic minorities had come down to 10%. With 30,000 newcomers entering the job

market. 30,000 more jobs are to be made available through this scheme in 2002.

Language services - a tailor made language training programme whereby refugees spend one day a week at a language school and three days a week developing their language skills in an environment which is relevant to their skills provided for all newcomers.

Canada
<i>Specialised Programmes</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Private Sponsorship Programme unique in Canada. - Host programme where Canadian volunteers help refugees resettle in Canada - Promotional material such as “Welcome to Canada”.
Australia
<i>Language</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adult Migrant English Programme provision of 510 hours of English language instruction at no cost. Includes child care support, home tutoring scheme, delivery of tuition in community centres through distant learning scheme.
<i>Data Collection:</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Management and accountability programs evaluating public acceptability of settlement programmes. - Longitudinal study of immigrants conducted to monitor the progress of newcomers in Australia.
Netherlands
<i>Specialised Programmes</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mutual contract laying down rights and responsibilities of newcomers and hosts. - Work-study programme for newcomers- one day schooling, and 3 day training to practice language. - Targetted programme linking individuals from ethnic minorities to places in areas facing skills shortages. - Internships offered to refugees in government departments. - Mentors advising newcomers on employment.

Section 4

Strategies for a managed integration programme

These case studies show that the UK needs to have a clearer sense of what it seeks to achieve through its immigration strategy and to design integration mechanisms accordingly. A managed integration strategy could help it shore up public support for the immigration system, deal with tensions in certain communities and tackle the prospect of skills shortages. The following are a mixture of ideas which could be explored for further development drawing on the experiences of the case study countries and some local innovations.

1. Managing public opinion:

We need to transform the debate about immigration in the UK. The experience of other countries shows that the government can play an important role in shaping the debate about immigration by working with public opinion.

- A compact for refugees

The Dutch experience of introducing a contract is a positive model for creating a pluralist and diverse society which comprises responsibilities and individual duties. As in Holland, the UK government could explore the idea of a compact between newcomers and the UK government. The government would need to commit itself to providing a structured integration package which is tailored to each individual. But services such as benefits, accommodation, employment guidance and language tuition would be conditional on refugees fulfilling their part of the deal: attending courses provided, committing themselves to finding paid employment. Such a scheme would mirror the New Deal and could help turn public opinion by demonstrating that both newcomers are committed to playing a role in society and the labour market rather than being passive recipients of welfare.

- Transforming the image of newcomers to Britain.

Policies should range from informing the public about the realities of asylum and the responsibilities which Britain has as a signatory to humanitarian conventions, to clarifying the facts driving migration around the world. It should present the realities about the costs involved in the asylum system and how these measure up against the benefits of being open to immigration. The figures can speak for themselves. For example, statistics show that the UK foreign-born population pays 10%

more to the State than it gets back on goods and services (Performance and Innovation Unit).

- Making the debate about immigration and integration into a debate about common needs.

The immigration debate should not be about granting special favours for refugees or about singling them out for lectures on our norms and values. Instead, this should be a debate about the needs which migrants share in common with their hosts: unemployment, poor infrastructure, the need for skills. Moreover, this should be a debate about the common rights and responsibilities that all people living in the UK share.

2. Plugging skills shortages:

The government needs to have an active role in preparing newcomers to become eligible for the UK job market - help them become productive members of society once they are given the right to remain, tap into their skills, to make them readily accepted for employment by linking them with the sections of the economy which are facing skills shortages.

- Facilitating skills recognition

Professional bodies need to adopt a system of benchmarks for professional immigrants. Already in the UK the British Medical Association has created a test to assess the validity of migrants' medical qualifications. For professions depending on more subjective skills, the State needs to provide validation and skills-assessment services as well as a counselling service for immigrants enabling them to learn how best to use their skills in the UK job market. In Holland, for example, each refugee is assigned a mentor to help them through this process. They can also provide the references which refugees are often unable to supply.

- Involving potential employers

Employers have a key role to play in the integration debate because the work place is an ideal space for the process to take shape: people can start interacting with UK-born individuals who share similar interests and skills and develop the language skills most suited to their needs. However, employers remain deeply sceptical about their role in the integration debate. While many companies are keen to be given greater freedom to tap into the international skills market, most are reti-

cent about engaging with the particular needs of newcomers and refugees. A shift in business's attitude will only take place through leadership and mediation. The UK should follow the Dutch government's example and act as a channel to potential employers who find it difficult to fill vacancies. As is the case in Holland, it should also create apprenticeship schemes in government departments, which both prove the employability of refugees and help develop skills.

- Improving paperwork, abolishing red tape and clarifying the exact status of migrants' permission to work

Before you can start involving employers the legal situation and status of individuals need to be absolutely clear. The paperwork in the UK is unsatisfactory. There is no single, easily recognisable document stating whether a refugee is allowed to work or not. For the most part employers therefore either refuse to get involved or those with positions to fill do so unawares, turning a blind eye to irregularities. There needs to be a clear set of rules for both newcomers and employers.

- Adapting language-provision to newcomers' needs

According to DfEE estimates, as many as 1.5 million people must improve their English in order to participate in education, work and society. Nevertheless, newcomers to the UK have at present have no specific legal entitlement to language provision. The language ability of all newcomers should be assessed and their programmes targeted accordingly. Currently there are no clear guidelines about the amount of hours that refugees in the UK are entitled to. Studies show that on average 1700 hours training are necessary for an individual to learn a new language from scratch. However, not all newcomers arriving in the UK need to start from scratch. It is therefore important to test language levels at the outset and track progress at regular intervals. ESOL, the main service provided by the government, is not sufficiently adapted to the needs of newcomers.

Firstly, it does not supply individuals with the linguistic skills which suit their particular profession and qualifications. If work is the key to integration then language tuition should be geared towards attaining fluency in a working environment. English language providers could follow the model of Southwark College, where refugee doctors are drilled on the specifics of, for example, how to manage a consultation with a patient. Instead of making classes theoretical, individuals are made to go through the motions of a routine check up.

Secondly, language provision needs to be adapted to the demands which work makes on newcomers' lives in order to allow them to obtain the intensive training

necessary to achieve linguistic fluency. Again, the work place is the ideal environment in which to help newcomers develop their language skills. In the 1970s the Industrial Language Training Programme in the UK supplied the services that are necessary today. Teachers went into factories, homes, shops and schools to deliver in situ language tuition. These services were not only free of charge, they were also targeted at the practical needs of a particular profession. A statutory obligation could be placed on employers to provide 2-3 hours per week of training courses for those with non-functional English. Ideally, schemes should also be provided for newcomers to practice when and where is convenient. AMEP, the Australian language training scheme, provides a large long-distance learning programme with books, videos and telephone learning and a home tutoring scheme.

Thirdly, language services need to be standardised and levels of attainment made easily recognisable. The TEFL qualifications are well known and trusted by employers, but ESOL, the equivalent course for refugees, is not well-known. Even though there are currently 6000 teachers prepared to supply the service, the scheme has very little brand recognition and is therefore easily dismissed by employers.

3. Make the system welcoming, empowering and involving host communities

Well-targeted integration schemes can be extremely cost effective because they can revolve around the services of volunteers and on the contribution of communities themselves. Measures to keep people out, on the other hand, are famously expensive.

More importantly, while the effects of regulatory systems are short-term, structured integration programmes can yield significant benefits in the long-term. Integration both helps to create a healthy society and harnesses the contribution which newcomers can make to the economy. The following section sets out a variety of cost-effective policy ideas:

- Make the system welcoming

A sense of belonging needs to be encouraged from day one. Instead, newcomers in the UK are met by an unwelcoming bureaucracy and a dearth of information. In Canada, great efforts are made to make people feel welcome. For example, government assisted refugees are met at the airport and all newcomers are provided with guides about life in Canada, with titles ranging from 'An Introduction to Canada' to 'Welcome to Canada'.

There is no need for the new accommodation centres to be unwelcoming and hostile. New arrivals staying in these centres should have access to information about services available for refugees and life in the UK.

- Develop a Host System

Reports from Canada have shown that newcomers have benefited greatly from this service. While some have stressed the benefits of having someone to help with the more routine tasks, such as finding day-care and schools for their children or learning about the tax and banking system, others have highlighted the benefit of establishing a relationship which in many cases has resulted in long-term friendship.

The host system could be an ideal way of getting employers to engage with integration. Similar private sector schemes, for example the Prince's Trust mentors for young business people programme already exist in the UK. As is the case with these schemes, professional volunteers could be matched with newcomers who share similar skills and qualifications. As well as offering support on a personal level, the relationship could help individuals establish contacts in relevant fields, learn about the opportunities available and get advice on how to go about entering areas in which they have previous expertise.

- Introduce a private sponsorship scheme

In Canada, 11% of refugees are privately sponsored. The idea behind the scheme is that strong community links can help prevent the alienation and isolation that many refugees experience. It also helps promote more progressive attitudes as it will demonstrate that communities are prepared to do their bit to help refugees and that many of the measures designed to promote integration are cost effective. A similar scheme should be piloted in the UK.

4. *Gathering Data*

- Create an integration index

There are currently several benchmarking systems being developed. The British Medical Association for example has set up a database for refugee doctors and the government is in the process of outlining a system to record the qualifications and skills of asylum seekers as they pass through induction centres.

However, there needs to be a more concerted effort to audit the skills which are already here and to assess the progress being made by newcomers settling in the UK. The results of the Australian longitudinal study have shown, for example, that 1994-1996 showed that unemployment rate of 37% compared to 1997-1999 unemployment rate of 14%. Policies have been implemented accordingly.

Integration should be broken down and viewed through a set of indicators so as to provide a context for policy discussions, to monitor public opinion, to measure performance and to foster some kind of understanding of what integration actually means. To help build an effective framework on integration, consider this sample list of indicators:

Economic

- How long does it take before individuals enter the job market?
- How long before they achieve financial independence?
- How many years before they catch up with native people with equivalent qualifications?
- Are they entering a field of prior employment?

Social/cultural

- Are they engaging in cultural activities?
- Have they joined an established social network?
- Are they engaging with community groups?
- Are they constructing new social groups?

Political

- Are they engaging with the political process?
- If eligible, are they voting?
- Are they participating in political parties?

This indexation system should be accompanied by a system for monitoring public acceptability - analysing whether people approve of the system and keeping track of how the public is responding to immigration and integration policies.

Conclusion

The immigration debate is currently weighed down by a collective lack of ambition. Our overriding goal cannot be simply to avoid migrants being a “burden” on the country. If it is, we will never be able to turn our immigration system into a major source of cultural, social and economic strength and a means of tapping into the skills and energies of newcomers.

This discussion paper shows some of the problems that arise from our failure to develop a systematic framework for managing migration and integration. It tries to bring to light some examples of international good practice and to put the UK situation in a broader context.

Over the next twelve months The Foreign Policy Centre and the Employability Forum will be carrying out a major research programme exploring and developing the lessons that the UK can learn from countries with developed integration strategies, including Canada, the Netherlands and Australia. It will map out the details of a set of concrete policy recommendations and a practical agenda for a compact for immigrants focusing on a long-term, two-way integration process with rights and responsibilities for both migrants and hosts.

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The Foreign Policy Centre Global Britons Programme

The Global Britons Programme was launched on the 50th anniversary of the Festival of Britain in the shadow of debates about devolution, asylum, Europe and the riots of the summer. Building on the success of Yasmin Alibhai-Brown 'After Multiculturalism', this programme looks at ways in which we can promote inclusive and outward-looking notions of Britishness.

Last September, The Foreign Policy Centre launched a UK-wide roadshow. Its remit will span from the role of education and key institutions in building an inclusive Britain to how the UK media presents the world. The programme opened with a series of nation-wide forums with representatives from the private, public and NGO sector, commentators from the media, the arts and community leaders. Events will take place in Manchester, Birmingham, Scotland, Wales and London.

The Global Britons Programme has been launched in collaboration with: The Stone Ashdown Trust, The BBC, The Commonwealth Institute, The Employability Forum, The Nuffield Foundation and The Barrow-Cadbury Trust. For more information, please contact Phoebe Griffith on 0207-4015358.

After Multiculturalism

by Yasmin Alibhai-Brown

Yasmin Alibhai-Brown argues that we need to fundamentally rethink our approach to national identity, and race. The old debate about multiculturalism cannot meet the challenge of reinventing identity and participation in a devolved Britain, a plural Europe and an increasingly interdependent world. We need to leave behind a debate which has too often only engaged blacks, Asians and 'ethnic minorities' rather than whites as well. After Multiculturalism looks at how we must create ways of talking about who we are, and what this will mean in specific policy areas.

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