

Helping refugees

An easy read version of The Draft Refugee Integration Strategy 2022 to 2027



easy
read

Contents

	Page
Introduction	3
Refugees and asylum seekers	5
Our strategy	8
Giving people respect	9
Helping refugees feel safe	12
Rights and responsibilities	15
Support to make the most of your life	17
For more information	20



In this easy read document, difficult words are in **bold**. We explain what these words mean in the sentence after they have been used.



Some words are blue and underlined. These are links which will go to another website which has more information.

Introduction



The Home Office is the government department in charge of all **immigration** issues including **refugees** and asylum **seekers**.



Immigration is when you go and live in a foreign country.



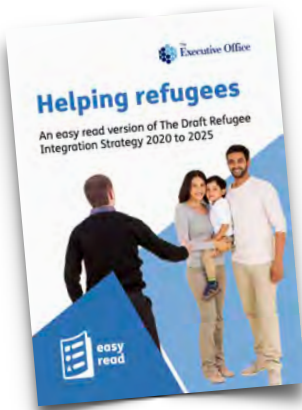
Refugees are people who have had to leave their country because it wasn't safe for them. They are able to live in another country.



An **asylum seeker** is someone who has had to leave their own country and asks to live in a new country.



After asylum seekers and refugees arrive here, the NI Executive is in charge of looking after many of their needs, like education, health and other services.



This information explains how we help refugees and asylum seekers and how we want to improve the way we support them.

Refugees and asylum seekers



Over the past 5 years the number of people around the world who are trying to escape from war and attacks has gone up.



Because of this, the number of people coming here has gone up.



Refugees and asylum seekers are some of the most **vulnerable** people.

Vulnerable means you might need help and support to stay safe and well.



Refugees and asylum seekers have often been in great danger in their own country and during their journey here.



People who come here as refugees or asylum seekers often go on to do great work for our local communities, setting up businesses or services.



They bring with them many different cultures which improve our own local communities.



However, they often suffer from **racism** and even **hate crimes** when they come here.



Racism is unfair or nasty treatment of someone because they belong to a particular race or **ethnic group**.



Hate crime is being harassed or attacked because people think you are different.



An **ethnic group** is a group of people that share a culture, religion, language or are from the same country.



Our vision

With this strategy we want to make sure refugees and asylum seekers:

- feel safe and important here.
- are able to make the most of their lives here.



We also want our communities to welcome and include people from any race or background.

Our strategy



A **strategy** is a plan of things to do over a period of time.



We have written a strategy to support refugees and asylum seekers here between 2022 and 2027.

During this time we want refugees and asylum seekers to:

- be given respect and seen as important people in our communities.
- feel safe and secure.
- know and understand their **rights** and responsibilities and have those rights respected.

Rights are things you are allowed to have and do by law.

Responsibilities are the things you are expected to do.

- have the support they need to make the most of their lives.



Giving people respect



We want refugees and asylum seekers to be given respect and treated as important people in our communities.

Working with people



We plan to:

- work with refugees and asylum seekers as we set up services for them.



- take into account the skills and experience of refugees and asylum seekers as we create the right services.

Learning and training



We plan to:

- involve refugees and asylum seekers and teachers in designing the teaching materials.



- make sure that we think about refugees and asylum seekers' culture and language when we plan education and teaching.



- include more schools in the **Schools of Sanctuary programme**.

The **Schools of Sanctuary programme** helps schools to welcome and include refugees and asylum seekers.



- help refugees and asylum seekers learn English so that they have more chance of getting a job.

Community Support



We plan to:

- look at how we supported refugees and asylum seekers in the past and see how we can do it better in the future.
- involve refugees and asylum seekers when we think about how to run our services better.
- help local communities to get on well with new refugees and asylum seekers.
- work closely with the community organisations that help refugees and asylum seekers.



Helping refugees feel safe



We want refugees and asylum seekers to feel safe and secure while they are here.

Housing

We plan to:

- work with the UK Government to make sure refugees and asylum seekers have a safe place to live.
- work with other organisations to make sure housing for refugees and asylum seekers is near to schools and other services that they need.



Limited access to money and other support

Many refugees and asylum seekers have very little money and sometimes are not allowed to work. They often have no way to access **benefits** and other support.



Benefits is money paid to some people by the government to help pay for the things they need to live.



We plan to:

- find a way to help refugees and asylum seekers who have little money and may have nowhere to live.
- train staff to help refugees and asylum seekers who have no money, no right to work, and can't access benefits.



Protecting the most vulnerable

We plan to:

- look at the ways we keep vulnerable refugees and asylum seekers safe.
- check if refugees and asylum seekers are vulnerable when they first come here.
- make sure that refugees and asylum seekers get a health check, including a check on their mental health.





- make sure we have the right services to help children who arrive as refugees without an adult.

Rights and responsibilities



We want refugees and asylum seekers to understand their rights and **responsibilities**.

Responsibilities are things that you have to do, like pay tax and follow the law.



We want refugees and asylum seekers to know and understand their rights.



Becoming a citizen of the UK

A **citizen of the UK** is someone who is allowed to live in the UK by law.

We want to make sure that:



- refugees and asylum seekers can access legal advice on immigration issues free of charge and from correctly trained people.



- there is good information about rights and responsibilities which refugees and asylum seekers can understand.



- refugees and asylum seekers get the advice they need as they try to become a UK citizen.



Working with communities

We want to work with local communities here so they understand more about the communities of refugees and asylum seekers who are living locally.

Access to services

We plan to:



- make sure staff providing services get the right training to understand more about what refugees and asylum seekers need.
- give good information to refugees and asylum seekers which explains the services that are available to them.



Support to make the most of your life



We want refugees and asylum seekers to be able to get the services and support they need to make the most of their lives.

Learning English

We plan to make sure that:



- Those preparing the overall plan for providing English language support for refugees and asylum seekers understand the needs of the refugees and asylum seekers



- there are classes for refugees and asylum seekers who have not started to learn English yet.



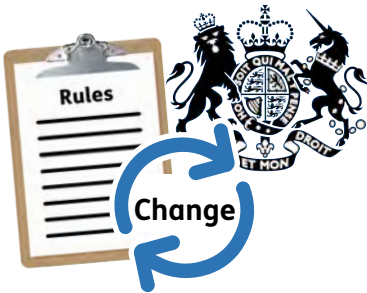
- there is help to learn English in schools for the children of refugee families.

Jobs and benefits



We want to:

- make sure the way we help people get a job is suitable for the needs of refugees and asylum seekers.
- keep in touch with the Home Office about any changes to the rules for helping refugees and asylum seekers to get a job.
- help refugees and asylum seekers to find any extra training they might need to get a job.



Working together

We want:

- all parts of the Northern Ireland Government to work together to provide services to refugees and asylum seekers.





- to keep talking to the organisations that work with refugees and asylum seekers here.

For more information



If you need more information please go to our website at:

www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk



or contact us by:

- email:

race.equality@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk



- post:

Racial Equality Unit
The Executive Office
Room E3.18
Castle Buildings
Stormont Estate
Belfast
BT4 3SR

This Easy Read information has been produced by easy-read-online.co.uk