

NIACE Development and Research



Key Findings



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‘Counting Up’ - A study to estimate the existing and future numbers of refugees in the East Midlands region

Abstract

The East Midlands Consortium for Asylum and Refugee Support (EMCARS) commissioned NIACE to examine available data sources on asylum seekers and refugees in the East Midlands region, in order to estimate the numbers of existing refugees in the region and provide estimates of future numbers.

The study covers the whole of the East Midlands (EM) region of England, although the data is focussed mainly on Derby, Leicester and Nottingham as the National Asylum Support Service dispersal areas and main cities of the region. This exercise is intended to contribute to the EM Refugee Integration Strategy in two main ways:

- It provides some evidence of the numbers of refugees who might be in the region in order to predict current and future demand for services;
- It highlights the inadequacy of our systems for data collection in this area and contains recommendations for how this might be addressed.

It was intended that the study would focus on refugees, including all categories of leave to remain. In reality, however, a number of data sources were unable to distinguish between people of different status and may therefore include asylum seekers, failed asylum seekers, refugees, family reunions and economic migrants.

Research methodology:

- ❖ The main approaches to data collection were to source data on the number of asylum seekers in the region and to calculate how many have and would become refugees; to contact organisations dealing directly with refugees for any information on numbers of services users; and to link with voluntary and community organisations to identify the size of particular communities. This approach enabled us to collect data from many organisations to build an overall picture of the situation.

Key Findings

The main conclusions of the project are:

- ❖ Our best estimate for the overall number of refugees in East Midlands in 2005 is around 9,000. This estimate is based on a number of assumptions and we

would welcome efforts by others in refining this process and in sharing information in order to make this figure more precise;

- ❖ We also estimate that 2,500 – 6,000 additional refugees will come to the East Midlands between 2005 and 2010, although our expectations are that the actual number will be towards the lower end of the range;
- ❖ Many organisations keep data about clients' gender, nationality and how many people per case;
- ❖ Most organisations operate within a city or small area of the region;
- ❖ Data kept by organisations often evolved over time and is tailored to their organisations purpose and needs. This means that data is not easily comparable and consistent with that kept by other organisations;
- ❖ Most organisations could only provide current figures and do not keep past data; some were unable to provide data either because they do not collect it or are not permitted to pass on this information. It is not possible to know whether cases appear in more than one organisation's figures;
- ❖ Apart from organisations' staff experience and opinion, there is no way of knowing how many refugees have moved from other UK regions or EU countries;
- ❖ Although significant numbers of asylum seekers began arriving into the East Midlands in early 2000 through the NASS dispersal policy, programme refugees from Vietnam, Bosnia and Kosovo had been arriving in the region throughout the 80s and 90s;
- ❖ Between 1992 and 2000, nearly 277,000 people received permission to remain in the UK while 89,100 applications remained outstanding. The majority of refugees would have been located in London and the South East, although a proportion would have come to the East Midlands. Regional data is not available;
- ❖ Since 2000, around 6,400 NASS supported asylum applicants, known to be in the East Midlands region, received permission to remain in the UK.

Recommendations

- ❖ The report makes a number of recommendations on which data should be collected in order to make it easier to estimate refugee numbers in the future. It will continue to be extremely difficult to make any sort of realistic estimations of refugee numbers if the Home Office is not able to provide accurate regional information on the number of applicants receiving a positive decision.

Output

Aldridge, F. and Dutton, Y. (2006) *'Counting Up' - A study to estimate the existing and future numbers of refugees in the East Midlands region*. Leicester, NIACE. Obtainable from: <http://emcars.rol.co.uk/>

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