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The integration and onward migration of refugees in Scotland: a review of the evidence

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Introduction

Despite the operation of UK dispersal policy for nearly a decade, there has been little examination of the resulting impacts upon refugee mobility and integration. Implemented under the 1999 Immigration and Asylum Act, the rationale behind UK dispersal was to 'spread the burden' (Robinson et al. 2003). The housing of asylum seekers to various locations across the UK was employed to discourage settlement in the South East (and particularly London) and distribute costs amongst UK local authorities.

The main aim was to relieve housing and social pressures in South East England, where the majority of new arrivals spontaneously concentrated. By instituting a policy of compulsory dispersal, UK asylum policy has removed an asylum seeker's freedom to choose where to settle. This means that since 2000, the UK Home Office has implemented a policy of dispersal whereby asylum seekers are housed on a no choice basis to locations around the country.

Asylum seekers in the UK are housed in various locations in England, Scotland and Wales. At the end of December 2006, the top three dispersal towns in England were Leeds, Birmingham and Manchester (Bennett et al. 2007). All asylum seekers fully supported by NASS and dispersed to Scotland are located in Glasgow City (5,010). In Glasgow, housing is provided for asylum seekers by Glasgow City Council as well as the YMCA.

A small number of asylum seekers are located in Edinburgh (75) and supported on a subsistence only basis. In Scotland, and indeed within the UK as a whole, the largest concentration of asylum seekers is housed within Glasgow. Furthermore, there are an estimated 10,000 refugees and asylum seekers in Scotland which represent over 50 different nationalities (Charlaff et al. 2004). As a result the discussion focuses upon this local case study.

Dispersal policy is one key element of UK asylum policy that determines the geographical distribution of asylum seekers across the country. But nearly a decade since the UK Home Office implemented dispersal policy, knowledge gaps still remain in understanding the onward migration decisions of refugees. Despite the clear aim of dispersal to determine local and national movements of asylum seekers, there has been surprisingly little attention paid to the role played by current UK dispersal policy in onward migration and integration.

Policy driven research has tended to focus upon international and national issues to the exclusion of micro level processes (Bowes et al. 2009). Indeed, the majority of literature on dispersal has focused upon critiquing the policy for being driven by void housing and concentrating vulnerable populations in deprived, inner city neighbourhoods. With attention clearly focused upon critiquing dispersal policy, the potential long-term implications for refugee integration have been under-researched.

The aim of this paper is to reassert the importance of considering mobility issues in refugee integration research. The current UK asylum policy environment is considered before attention turns to the theoretical developments in understanding refugee integration. Empirical evidence is presented from the Scottish Refugee

Council's SUNRISE (Strategic Upgrade of National Refugee Integration Services programme) database to identify the geography of onward migration flows as well as the diversity of individuals engaged in movement around the UK during the asylum process as well as after being granted or refused status. The empirical material is employed to provoke questions of how onward migration may be linked to refugee integration. This includes considering factors which predispose individuals to migrate and how this may usefully provide insights into the process of refugee integration.

UK asylum policy

The majority of literature on UK dispersal has focused upon critiquing or evaluating the policy. Recent accounts have identified UK dispersal policy as one 'mechanism of exclusion' employed by UK asylum policy, alongside deportation and detention (Bloch and Schuster 2005). Dispersal policy is therefore identified as part of the apparatus of restrictive immigration regimes which aims to deter asylum applicants (Morris 2002; Schuster 2005). Governments across Europe, including the UK, have increasingly shifted from the exceptional to the normalised use of policy instruments in the ongoing attempt to control and manage immigration whilst deterring 'bogus' asylum applicants. And given recent legislative changes, destitution can be added to this list of exclusionary policies (Refugee Survival Trust 2005).

A report commissioned on UK dispersal identified factors that should be assessed when deciding upon the suitability of areas for settlement of asylum seekers (Audit Commission 2000). This included considering the ethnic composition of areas, existing community support networks, language support and employment opportunities. Nevertheless, commentary on UK dispersal policy has highlighted the ways in which dispersal policy has failed to adhere to these recommendations.

Dispersal has removed individuals from kinship, social networks and community organisations which can leave individuals marginalised and socially excluded (Robinson et al. 2003). The selection of dispersal locations, rather than being guided by the existence of existing ethnic communities, has largely been driven by available housing. This has led to asylum seekers being concentrated in socially deprived locations (Anie et al. 2005). Indeed, seven local authorities that serve as major dispersal areas outside London feature in the UK's top 20 deprived areas (Phillimore and Goodson 2006).

This means that asylum seekers have been exposed to highly volatile environments in which they have faced hostility and prejudice (Zetter et al. 2002a). Several problems associated with asylum seeker dispersal in the UK have included poor community relations and hostile reception (Dawson 2002). This has resulted in asylum seekers facing social exclusion and isolation in local dispersal areas (Spicer 2008).

Alongside the restrictive asylum policy regime, the UK Home Office has demonstrated its full commitment to refugee integration. In 2000 the document 'Full and Equal Citizens' was published. And since then the Home Office has spearheaded a series of National Integration Conferences across the UK. A number of research projects investigating integration have also been commissioned by the Immigration Research and Statistics Service (IRSS). And in 2005 the 'Full and Equal Citizens' document was superseded by a new integration strategy 'Integration Matters'. The

UK Home Office is currently in the process of updating its integration strategy and this will be published in 2008.

Understanding refugee integration

There is a significant body of literature which has documented the multiple aspects of refugee integration as well as critically debating the term itself (Castles et al, 2001). Early writings focused upon theorising the process of movement and reception within host countries (Kunz, 1981). Research has identified that the integration process is influenced by the institutional environment of the receiving society as well as personal capacities of the settling population (Valtonen, 2004). Theorists have identified indicators of integration such as the functional and social domain (Zetter et al., 2002b). Most recently the Indicators of Integration study, commissioned by the UK Home Office, outlined a theoretical framework to identify key indicators of refugee integration (Ager and Strang 2004).

Building upon this work, Ager and Strang (2008) outline their conceptual framework to understanding integration in a recent edition of the *Journal of Refugee Studies*. Ager and Strang (2008) regard the framework as a middle-range theory which seeks to provide a coherent conceptual structure for considering what constitutes the key components of integration. The framework has four domains of integration. This includes means and markers such as employment, housing, education and health. These are said to be not only markers of integration but also potential means to support the achievement of refugee integration. There are social connections which includes social bridges, social bonds and social links. Facilitators include language and cultural knowledge as well as safety and stability. And finally the foundation is built upon rights and citizenship.

In the context of this research, what is most interesting from the accompanying discussion surrounding the conceptual framework is that mobility issues are only mentioned once. When discussing the stability of communities, Ager and Strang (2008) relate how the empirical research uncovered accounts of potentially positive community relationships being undermined by refugees moving to another location (or due to the expectation of future movements).

For example they cite the example of Pollokshaws (Glasgow) where residents were frustrated by the continual movement of individuals and how this prevented local communities maintaining relationships with refugees. Similarly, in Islington (London) long-term residents argued that high levels of refugee mobility undermined the sense of community. This analysis thus hints at the potential impact of short-term, localised movements upon the integration of refugees. Given the lack of attention paid to the connections between refugee integration and mobility, further investigation is required. Nevertheless, before moving on to the empirical research, useful insights can be gained by examining writings on previous dispersal schemes in the UK.

There are a limited number of studies which have explored and evaluated UK dispersal schemes, particularly in relation to onward movement and understanding integration. Robinson (2003a) provides a useful summary and evaluation of government resettlement schemes that have operated in the UK. In chronological order this has included the resettlement of Poles, Ugandan Asians, Chileans,

Vietnamese, Bosnians and Kosovans. With the exception of the Bosnian resettlement programme, dispersal policies in the UK have largely failed, in the sense that individuals have not settled in the dispersal sites long-term. This is because policies have been driven by available housing which has resulted in groups being housed in locations with no pre-existing ethnic communities. A key outcome of UK resettlement programmes has therefore been onward (or secondary) migration flows which has resulted in the concentration of groups in metropolitan areas (such as London, Birmingham and Manchester).

As well as documenting onward migration, comparative examination of two of the above resettlement programmes provides additional insights into refugee migration and integration. The first case study was the evaluation of the resettlement of Vietnamese boat people in the UK during the 1980's (Robinson 1993; Robinson and Hale 1989). Initially fleeing to parts of Asia like Malaysia and Thailand, this group of refugees were resettled by UNHCR, as part of the policy of third country resettlement. Around 20,000 Vietnamese refugees were resettled in the UK during this time. On arrival to the UK, the Vietnamese refugees were dispersed to various locations across the UK. In Robinson and Hale's (1989) research, examination of a database containing 12,000 records of Vietnamese refugees in the UK facilitated the analysis of secondary movements of dispersed refugees.

The research concluded that the policy was generally unsuccessful because individuals did not remain in the dispersal areas. Some 51 per cent of the sample had changed their address since resettlement. One third of the movers had changed their address within the first 12 months of arrival and more than one half had made their first move within the first two years of arrival. This suggested a high level of dissatisfaction with the accommodation individuals were allotted during resettlement. There were several problems but amongst the motivations for movement was the lack of a pre-existing Vietnamese community to which new arrivals could turn for support. So because there were no social networks within the dispersal areas, individuals migrated to other parts of the UK to get support. Social networks were therefore crucial in explaining the onward migration of this particular dispersed refugee group.

The second case study was an evaluation of the dispersal of Bosnians in the UK during the 1990's (Robinson and Coleman 2000). The Bosnian refugees were part of a quota of refugees that were resettled in the UK from 1992 to 1995. And again this group were dispersed to various locations across the UK. There were six clusters in Central Scotland, London, North East of England, West Yorkshire, West Midlands and East Midlands. The main aim behind this programme was to steer Bosnians away from settlement in London.

The secondary movements of Bosnian refugees were significantly different to the Vietnamese refugees of the 1980's. Robinson and Coleman (2000) discovered that the Bosnians were geographically immobile after dispersal across the UK. The Refugee Council estimated that by the end of 1996 fewer than 200 Bosnians had engaged in secondary migration. And most of the moves were motivated by a desire for better accommodation rather than to live somewhere else in the UK. As a result, Robinson and Coleman (2000) suggested that the dispersal locations were generally appropriate but an important factor was the absence of an existing community. There were no pre-existing Bosnian communities in the dispersal areas or crucially in any part of the UK prior to this programme. The absence of social networks influenced the migration

decisions of Bosnians and resulted in geographical immobility, namely the refugees remained in the dispersal regions. Both case studies illustrate the importance of social networks and existing communities (or not), embedded at the local and regional level, in determining the onward migration flows of refugees. Despite these useful insights, however, there are several areas that still require investigation.

As outlined in the introduction, existing research in the UK has extensively evaluated the implementation of UK dispersal policy since 2000. From a policy perspective, however, the onward migration of refugees *after* UK dispersal still requires further investigation. An analysis of Home Office data by Robinson (2003b) focused upon the extent of secondary migration to London and other cities in the South East. He found that secondary migration rates averaged 18-20 per cent for individuals that had been waiting for an asylum decision for 18 months. And the destination of most migrants was London, Birmingham and Manchester.

Reasons given for migration included racism, isolation, an absence of key infrastructure including religious institutions and legal advice as well as a sense of vulnerability due to being visibly different. In the Scottish context anecdotal evidence, drawn from a government commissioned skills audit, found that in a sample of just over 500 individuals some 88 per cent indicated they would like to remain in their current dispersal location in Scotland (Charlaff et al. 2004). Nevertheless, this study documented desired as opposed to actual movement as well as significantly identifying the 'call from the south' as potentially influencing final migration decisions.

As a policy of social engineering which influences the initial geographical distribution of asylum seekers more information is required on what happens next. And this is particularly timely given the government's recent policy which seeks to influence the geographical distribution of refugees by establishing a local connection. Section 11 of Asylum and Immigration (Treatment of Claimants, etc) Act 2004 amended the local connection provisions of English and Welsh homelessness legislation so that asylum seekers automatically establish a local connection with the last area where they were provided with accommodation under section 95 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 (Scottish Refugee Council 2007).

This means local authorities can refer any application for housing back to the local authority in the dispersal area. Furthermore, the integration of refugees is said to depend, not only on political commitment, but also the length of time that asylum seekers reside in the dispersal location (Sim and Bowes 2007). One way to investigate and evaluate the integration or long term outcomes of refugees (Home Office 2000; 2005) is to consider onward migration.

Furthermore, it is necessary to move beyond snapshot approaches to refugee migration and instigate longitudinal studies of refugee migration (Stewart 2004; Black et al. 2003). Documenting onward migration is one way, if somewhat simplistic, in which the long-term experiences of refugees can be explored. Recent work by Lindley and Van Hear (2007) has focused upon the onward movements of EU citizens who were previously refugees. Having acquired EU citizenship and thus freedom of movement, there is anecdotal evidence of high levels of mobility within the EU. Lindley and Van Hear's (2007) research documents the onward mobility of Somalis and Sri Lankan Tamils in the EU. Estimates show that over 20,000 EU citizens born

in Somalia have relocated to the UK from other parts of Europe. Explanations for this onward mobility are linked to economic opportunities, education and social environment. Similarly, there is anecdotal evidence of Sri Lankan Tamils regrouping in the UK in recent times. This research usefully challenges assumptions surrounding the immobility of refugees and the notion of a linear path of resettlement that either results in refugees permanently settling in the country of sanctuary or returning to the home country.

In sum, there is a need to examine the micro scale movements of refugees after being granted status to provide insights into the integration process. Just as the inter-EU movements of refugees have been largely overlooked, several questions remain concerning the inter-country movements of refugees. It is vital, then, to advance beyond accounts of UK dispersal that focus upon state and international level processes, towards documenting local and personal experiences. And one way to explore this is to examine the migration patterns of refugees beyond the initial relocation or dispersal.

An investigation of onward migration in the context of current UK dispersal policy is valuable for several reasons. First this will provide insights into the impact of current legislation aimed at encouraging a local connection within UK dispersal locations as well as evaluating the long term integration of refugees. And second, this research can help further understandings of long term migration strategies by documenting the geography of refugees with particular attention paid to inter-country movements.

UK dispersal and data sources

In terms of documenting the onward migration of refugees in the UK, there are several challenges. The absence of a refugee variable in the decennial census prevents the migration of refugees from being monitored (Stewart 2004). At the national level, the UK Home Office Research and Development Service publish annual asylum statistics as well as quarterly data. This data provides limited insights into the initial mobility of asylum seekers on entering the UK. This data source outlines total numbers of asylum cases, asylum seekers supported by the National Asylum Support Service (NASS)¹ as well as asylum seekers who receive subsistence only support from NASS.

At the local level, data is published by various organisations. Within Scotland, for example, the COSLA Strategic Migration Partnership publishes asylum data via an on-line portal. This data outlines the total number of asylum seekers resident in Glasgow. This is provided by local area as well as composition by national group. Nevertheless, this data does not detail onward migration flows of refugees.

The introduction of the Home Office funded Strategic Upgrade of National Refugee Integration Services programme (SUNRISE), which began in October 2005, led to the creation of a valuable database which opens up the potential of exploring onward migration flows of refugees. This is a pilot programme that was set up to run for three years. The aim of the SUNRISE scheme, set up by the UK Borders Agency, is to

¹ The National Asylum Support Service (NASS) was replaced by the UK Border and Immigration Agency (BIA), which has recently been replaced by the UK Borders Agency (UKBA).

provide support to refugees by assigning an individual caseworker after being granted leave to remain. The role of the caseworker is to provide advice on housing, employment, benefit and financial advice, access to English language tuition and information on family reunification. Intensive support is provided to individuals by the caseworker for the first 28 days.

During this period a Personal Integration Plan (PIP) is discussed which includes setting goals for each individual. Progress in achieving targets and goals is then reviewed with the caseworkers every three months and up to one year after the caseworker is assigned. The SUNRISE service ended in October 2008 and has been replaced by the Refugee Integration and Employment Service (RIES), which covers all areas across the UK. For the purposes of this paper, the data analysis will focus upon the SUNRISE database.

Glasgow case study: SUNRISE programme

The geographical context of Glasgow city and its social make-up provides a unique and interesting focus of attention. There are several key issues which should be noted at this point. First, as a city with limited experience of multiculturalism, dispersal policy has created several challenges and opportunities (Sim and Bowes 2007).

Second, the asylum and immigration regime in Scotland is complex due to the devolved government (Bowes et al. 2009). Legislation associated with immigration and asylum is a matter reserved for Westminster, with the National Asylum Support Service (NASS) established to manage dispersal on a UK-wide basis. Nevertheless, the multiple agencies that provide support to asylum seekers such as health, education and social services operate and are controlled by the Scottish Parliament.

Furthermore, in terms of legislation, the 2004 Homelessness Act does not apply to individuals living in Scotland. This effectively means that individuals granted status in Scotland can freely move to another part of Scotland or the rest of the UK and be entitled to apply for local authority housing. This is not the case for asylum seekers that are dispersed to other parts of the UK, who must remain in the dispersal location to qualify for local authority housing.

Fourth, there is a uniquely positive political climate towards immigration issues in Scotland. Several policies exist to actively encourage migration and settlement in Scotland (e.g. Fresh Talent) as well as supporting the successful settlement of refugees (e.g. Scottish Refugee Integration Forum) (Charlaff et al. 2004).

Furthermore, like other local cities (Finney and Robinson 2008), there is relatively positive media coverage of immigration issues in Scotland as well as more favourable public opinion towards asylum issues (Lewis 2006). And finally, the composition of the asylum seeking population in Glasgow contains a larger proportion of families and children than other dispersal locations across the UK (Scottish Refugee Council 2008).

The SUNRISE programme was implemented at the local level within UK dispersal areas. As previously noted, this pilot programme was replaced by RIES in October 2008. In Glasgow, the SUNRISE programme was administered by the Scottish

Refugee Council (SRC). In terms of the data recorded, the SRC has maintained a database of all SUNRISE clients during the three year period. At the time access was granted to the database there were 662 records (from October 2005 to January 2008). The database contains information for each individual client on the following issues: personal details, benefits advice, housing, employment, education, health, financial issues and community support.

Clients recorded on this database are individuals living in Scotland who have been granted status to remain. It does not include asylum seekers who are still waiting for a decision on their case. Crucially, this database records the address of clients as well as any changes in address. It also records whether an individual has moved away or has dropped out of the SUNRISE scheme (which may indicate migration). The documentation of geographical location over time and recording changes in status presents a unique opportunity to explore onward migration flows of refugees. Unlike previous studies it records actual migration as opposed to intentions or desires (Charlaff et al. 2004). This paper will focus upon analysing records of clients in the SUNRISE database.

Evidence from the SUNRISE database

Given the lack of official data published on asylum seeker and refugee onward migration, the paper will focus upon data drawn from the SUNRISE database. At the time of analysis there were 662 records on the database, which ran from 18 October 2005 until 25 January 2008. The gender of the sample is relatively equal with 56 per cent male and 44 per cent female. The top ten nationalities are Afghanistan, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eritrea, Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, Somalia, Turkey, Zimbabwe and Sudan. Amongst this group, the top two nationalities are Somali (18 per cent) and Eritrean (17 per cent). Additionally, 167 individuals from other countries are on the database, which represent more than 50 different countries.

The Housing and SUNRISE Team at the Scottish Refugee Council deal with a variety of client groups, as evidence in table one. There are five different types of client group, which illustrate the variety of migration flows associated with the dispersal process. Individuals can be dispersed to parts of the UK but then subsequently migrate to Scotland either during the asylum process or after being granted status (Type one). Individuals dispersed to Glasgow may decide to remain in the city after being granted status (Type two). Individuals that are dispersed to Glasgow may decide to migrate to other parts of Scotland or other parts of the UK (Types three and four).

Such onward movements occur when individuals move to Section 4 accommodation or a tenancy upon refusal/grant of status. And finally individuals may migrate onward to another EU country, such as in the case of family reunification (Type five). These onward movements are particularly interesting in light of Section 11 of the 2004 Asylum and Immigration Act, which aims to create a local connection and minimise onward movement. Whilst individuals categorised from types one to four are commonly seen within the SRC offices, type five is relatively rare. Finally it should be noted that although the majority of individuals have permission to migrate after the asylum process, type one, three and four are only authorised after the individual is granted status.

The SUNRISE database is an excellent starting point in analysing the onward movements of individuals as it records the address of each client after having taken up the SUNRISE services. It should be noted that the database only records details for individuals granted status whilst living in Scotland and excludes individuals who migrate to Scotland after the asylum process. As indicated by the data in table two throughout the period of the SUNRISE programme a number of refugees have left Scotland.

The data seems to suggest that less people are leaving over the three time periods, decreasing from 33 per cent in the first period to only 18 per cent in the final period. Nevertheless, this data may change as time progresses and further data is gathered on the two cohorts over time. As such, these statistics only provide a snapshot of movements for each period in time. The onward movements of refugees can be documented by further examining the recorded address of clients in the database.

The known addresses of clients are recorded in the SUNRISE database. This is recorded as address one and address two. As table three illustrates, the address of some 153 cases were unknown. Address one indicates that 424 individuals had remained in Glasgow with 18 moving away (the destination location is unknown) and 59 cases 'dropped out'. This term is used when clients are no longer part of SUNRISE, the majority of which have probably moved out of Scotland. Address two indicates that more cases have dropped out (104) and moved away (43) with 337 individuals remaining in Glasgow. To usefully employ this data to analyse the reasons for onward migration the data has been allocated to three different categories: dispersal, migrant and dropped out (table four).

The dispersal category includes all individuals who have been dispersed to Glasgow and remained in Glasgow after receiving status (this group also includes two individuals whose first and second address was Edinburgh, which indicates no movement). The migrant category includes individuals that have moved from the initial dispersal location to either another location in Scotland or another part of the UK. The dropped out category are individuals who are no longer using the SUNRISE service. This includes individuals who no longer use the service but still remain in Scotland as well as those who leave Scotland (nevertheless there is no address recorded to confirm migrant status).

Tabulation of this data indicates that 50 per cent of the sample have remained in Glasgow, some 11 per cent have moved to another location and 16 per cent have dropped out (some of which have likely left Scotland). The addresses of some 23 per cent of the sample are unknown and so these cases have been excluded from the subsequent analysis.

Table 1: Client groups of the Scottish Refugee Council, Glasgow

Client groups	Description	Authorised by BIA?	Timescale of migration
Type 1	Dispersed to elsewhere in UK and subsequent move to Scotland	ONLY AFTER asylum process	During OR after asylum process
Type 2	Dispersed to Glasgow and internal migration within city upon grant of status	Yes	After asylum process
Type 3	Dispersed to Glasgow and move to another part of Scotland	ONLY AFTER asylum process	During OR after asylum process
Type 4	Dispersed to Glasgow and move to another part of the UK	ONLY AFTER asylum process	During OR after asylum process
Type 5	Migration to another EU member state (e.g. through family reunification)	Yes	After asylum process
Source: SRC SUNRISE Caseworkers			

Table 2: SUNRISE statistics, Glasgow

	17/10/05-31/03/06	01/04/06-31/03/07	01/04/07-31/01/08
SUNRISE notifications	108	183	330
Refugees using SUNRISE	80	159	306
Refugees left Scotland (after SUNRISE)	26 (33%)	40 (25%)	56 (18%)
Source: SRC SUNRISE Database			

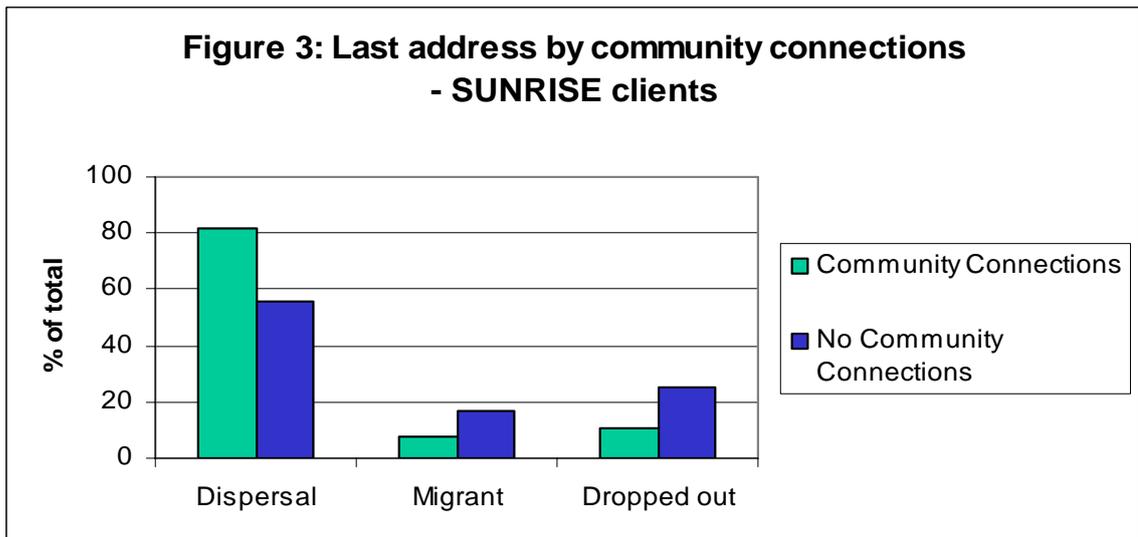
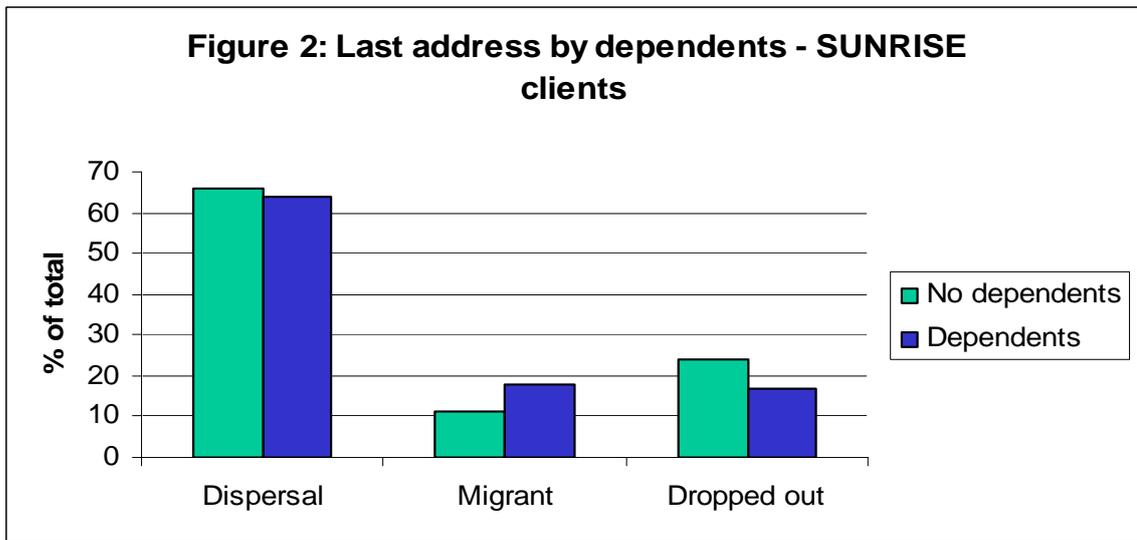
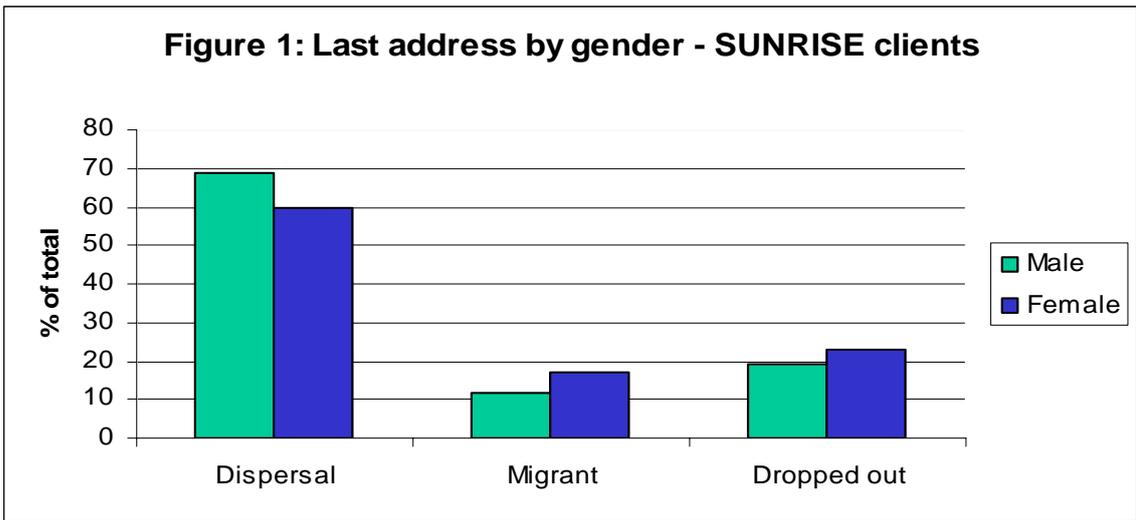
Table 3: Last address of SUNRISE clients

Location	Address 1	Address 2
Glasgow	424	337
London	4	6
Edinburgh	2	7
England		4
Slough		2
Birmingham	1	1
Bridge of Weir	1	1
Cardiff		1
Milton Keynes		1
Perth		1
Renfrew		1
Moved away	18	43
Dropped out	59	104
Unknown	153	153
Source: SRC SUNRISE Database		

Table 4: Last address of SUNRISE clients

Location	Total	% of total
Dispersal	331	50
Dropped out	107	16
Migrant	71	11
Unknown	153	23
Note: The unknown category has been excluded from analysis.		
Source: SRC SUNRISE Database		

To begin data analysis, the last address of SUNRISE clients was correlated with multiple variables in the dataset. The purpose behind this was to investigate whether factors like gender could explain why some individuals remained in dispersal sites whilst other clients had migrated away or dropped out of the SUNRISE scheme. Figure one outlines the results for gender. Although not statistically significant, these results interestingly seem to suggest that men may be more likely to remain in Glasgow (69 percent) and less likely to migrate (12 per cent). On the contrary, women are more likely to migrate (17 per cent) and not to remain in Glasgow (60 per cent). Women may be more likely to suffer isolation in dispersal regions and so it may be logical to expect individuals to seek out support from social networks by moving to more favourable neighbourhoods after being granted status (Spicer 2008).



Source: SRC SUNRISE Database

Figure 4: Case studies of client groups using SUNRISE

Type 1

Kate is from Iraq and arrived in the UK with her son, aged eight years old. She claimed asylum at the port of entry in 2007. She was dispersed to Liverpool whilst her case was processed under the New Asylum Model (NAM). Four weeks later she received status. Immediately after being granted status she moved with her son to Glasgow, to live near a friend already living in the city. As a widow and single mother, the need to gain emotional support from her friend influenced her decision to move to Glasgow. She gained housing in an appropriate location and enjoyed living in the city with her son. Seven months later, however, she informed the SUNRISE team that she had tracked down a family who were previously her neighbours in Baghdad but who were now living in London. She therefore decided to move to London to gain support for her and her child from a family that she considered to be like kin.

Type 3

Joyce is a pregnant, single female from Sudan. She arrived in Scotland and claimed asylum in 2006. During her claim she was supported by NASS in Glasgow. When leaving her country, Joyce planned to travel to Scotland as she was aware of the Sudanese community in Edinburgh. As such, when she was granted status she immediately moved from Glasgow to Edinburgh. It is unclear whether she made the decision to move to Edinburgh before arriving in Scotland or during her time in Glasgow. Continued contact with the SUNRISE caseworkers indicates that Joyce is happy in Edinburgh. There have been visible improvements in her mental well-being and general demeanour. She is now attending college and plans to stay in Edinburgh.

Type 2

Juliette is a single female from Burundi who sought asylum in 2003. She was dispersed to Glasgow under the UK dispersal scheme. She was granted status in 2008. During her time as an asylum seeker, Juliette attended college and developed social networks within the local community. She also felt well supported by the SUNRISE caseworkers in Glasgow. As a result, she decided to remain in the city after her status was granted. Initially she was offered the opportunity of living in her NASS accommodation as a temporary furnished flat. She did not feel, however, that the area was suitable due to a previous history of racially motivated abuse in the area. She therefore lived with friends until suitable housing became available. Juliette plans to remain in Glasgow and is currently pursuing higher education as well as working part-time.

Source: SUNRISE Caseworkers, Scottish Refugee Council

Figure two explores the influence of dependents upon onward migration flows. The data suggests that whether individuals have dependents or not does not influence a decision to remain in Glasgow. Nevertheless, those individuals who do not have dependents appear to be more likely to drop out of the SUNRISE programme (24 per cent). And those with dependents are more likely to migrate (18 per cent) compared to those with no dependents (11 per cent). Indeed it has been found that schooling is important to refugees and families may decide to relocate to areas where children can attend culturally diverse schools (Spicer 2008). This may partly explain the higher levels of migration amongst those with dependents in this sample.

Finally figure three explores the role of social networks in onward migration. A variable was created called 'community connections' to indicate whether individuals were involved in community organisations, religious establishments or had friends or family in Scotland. As would be expected, these community connections appear to influence onward migration. Those individuals with community connections were more likely to remain in Glasgow (80 per cent) whereas those with no community connections were more likely to migrate (17 per cent) or drop out (25%).

Overall, the above investigation provides a useful starting point in examining onward migration in the context of UK dispersal. Finally a brief consideration of case study material can add flesh to these statistics. As outlined in figure four, the individual's case study material illustrates the diverse experiences and influences upon refugee migration. Anecdotal evidence from SUNRISE caseworkers in Glasgow seems to confirm a higher propensity for women and those with children to migrate. Factors such as child care and the need for emotional support from family or community networks appear to influence migration plans (see types one and three).

The perception of better employment opportunities elsewhere seems to be an equally important factor in explaining migration flows from Scotland to other parts of the UK. The decision to remain in a dispersal site could be affected by the length of stay as well as development of social networks (type two). Clearly more in-depth investigation is needed to explore the interplay between gender, family issues, social networks, community organisations and employment.

Conclusion

Given the lack of data available on the onward migration flows of refugees, the SUNRISE database provides an excellent opportunity to explore onward migration flows in the context of refugee integration. Much emphasis has been placed upon the initial movements of refugees fleeing persecution or how individuals facilitate entry into safe countries. Nonetheless, the migration of refugees does not stop upon entry to a third country.

At the national level policies can be implemented to control the internal movements of individuals, such as UK dispersal policy, but at the micro level personal decisions are taken by individuals during and after the asylum process. It is therefore vital that micro level processes are included within wider debates on asylum issues and refugee integration (Bowes et al, 2009). There is a need to consider how the life histories of individuals intersect with the policies of the state, which seek to constrain or

manipulate the onward movements of particular groups.

Drawn from the SUNRISE client database, initial analysis of records suggests that around half of all clients dispersed to Glasgow remain in the city. In terms of migration, this data raises interesting questions as to why only half of the clients remain in Glasgow but equally why do certain individuals decide not to remain in Glasgow. It is therefore not only important to investigate the migration of refugees after being granted status but equally the immobility of refugees.

The initial results suggest that gender, family composition and community connections are important factors in understanding mobility issues. Yet there are important issues which have not been uncovered by the analysis. Differences between men and women have been highlighted but more analysis is required. For example, is this trend linked to the marital status of individuals, an individual's nationality or the number of children within a family? Further analysis is required to provide insights into the agency which refugees employ in making choices and decisions about their future, individual intentions as well as potential opportunities available to individuals.

The results from this analysis can be usefully employed to provoke questions related to Ager and Strang's (2008) framework. First, several issues are raised in relation to the markers and means of integration. One might ask how does migration impact upon employment, housing, education or health of refugees? And conversely, how do employment, housing, education or health experiences impact upon migration decisions? For example does the fact that individuals decide to migrate mean they have more chance of obtaining a job but at the same time may be limited in terms of housing opportunities? Does the decision to migrate negatively impact upon education outcomes (e.g. children moving schools)? Or does migration positively affect the health of individuals (e.g. improve mental well being)?

Furthermore, it is important to examine the interconnections between these domains. For example do either positive or negative effects of migration subsequently impact upon employment opportunities? We should consider whether there is the potential for migration to have a secondary, indirect impact upon the integration of refugees due to the inherent relationship between the markers and means of integration.

Next, in relation to social connections several interesting issues arise. For example, does the existence of social bonds or links influence the migration decisions of refugees? If so, then can migration be regarded as an important indirect factor which contributes to the integration of refugees? In the literature the onward movement of refugees has generally been regarded as a negative factor, suggesting the failure of dispersal policies (Robinson 2003a). It can often signal dissatisfaction with housing or the dispersal site.

Nevertheless such movement may be evidence of refugee strategies and the exercising of agency to overcome barriers and facilitate integration. Alternatively does the existence of social bonds or bridges prevent onward migration by connecting individuals to a local area? This highlights the importance of defining the relationship between social connections and migration as being multi-directional. One can hypothesise that the existence of social connections is closely linked to migration but there can be multiple potential outcomes.

Next, what is the relationship between social bridges and migration? Do individuals migrate due to the lack of social bridges or in some instances hostility? Notably, Spicer (2008) has found evidence of asylum seekers moving to neighbourhoods which are considered more inclusive. Or do individuals migrate as a strategy to strengthen social bridges? To what extent does the existence (or not) of ethnic communities in Glasgow and across the UK influence current onward migration flows? Furthermore, one must recognise the dynamic way in which legislative changes may influence migration decisions.

Dispersal policy itself has significantly altered the social landscape in Glasgow and one could therefore question whether increases in ethnic group formation have influenced recent migration decisions of refugees. Indeed, how have migration decisions been influenced by the establishment of new refugee communities in dispersal sites, which have resulted from the operation of dispersal policy for nearly a decade? Namely to what extent has the way in which Glasgow has become synonymous with UK dispersal influenced individuals to either remain in the city or to seek out alternative locations to avoid potential stigmatisation?

Moving on to facilitators and the role played by language and cultural knowledge, one may ask whether the movement of refugees helps or hinders the language skills or cultural competence of individuals. For example does the awareness of cultural expectations within particular areas, which are developed over time, influence an individual's decision to remain in dispersal sites? Considering safety and stability, in what ways does the need for a sense of physical safety influence the migration decisions of refugees?

One could identify the welcoming political climate (recently noted by the Independent Asylum Commission) along with positive media coverage in Scotland as encouraging the immobility of refugees in Glasgow. Nevertheless, although greater tolerance to asylum seekers is evident in Scotland, there are still hostile attitudes towards asylum seekers amongst some groups (Lewis 2006). So how do experiences of harassment and intimidation impact upon migration decisions in the short and long term? Can migration, rather than being regarded solely as a failure of dispersal, be identified as a strategy of resilience amongst refugees?

Finally, questions arise in relation to rights and citizenship. The immigration legislation context of Glasgow combined with the 2004 Homelessness Act in Scotland certainly seems to privilege the choices of individuals granted status in Scotland to determine their onward migration strategies. So in what ways has housing legislation impacted upon the fundamental right of refugees to migrate? And are there differences evident across the UK? Is there any evidence that this legislation hinders refugees from migrating? If not, what is the impact upon refugees and the implications for integration (e.g. homelessness, overcrowding, private sector lettings)? This discussion usefully highlights the need to consider the role played by migration in understanding refugee integration.

As a way forward, there are key priorities for data research. First, there is a need to further analyse the SUNRISE database in terms of variables. A hierarchical log linear modelling approach is suggested. This would control for variables such as gender, and

explore the importance of other factors in influencing (im)mobility. Second, it is notable that the SUNRISE database held by the SRC in Glasgow does not record the details of individuals who migrate to Scotland after being granted status. This means that the SUNRISE database contains no information on individuals moving to Scotland, thus hampering investigations of why such migration decisions are taken.

Any future study would thus benefit from a comparative element that examined onward migration flows amongst a parallel group of refugees that move from elsewhere to Scotland or from other parts of Europe upon grant of status. Furthermore, although the database records individuals who migrate away from Scotland it does not contain any information about what happens next to these individuals.

This links to the third priority for research, namely the need to instigate a longitudinal study of refugees to explore mobility issues in a wider context. This could take the form of a cohort study in which a specific sample of the existing database is identified and then followed through time. This could build upon the existing SUNRISE database to incorporate the newly established RIES programme. This type of study could include both quantitative and qualitative elements.

For example, detailed quantitative information could be collected from the cohort at key points over a period of time, e.g. one year, two years and five years. Within the cohort study, there could be a sub-sample identified who were questioned in detail about their mobility. Individuals who remain in the dispersal region as well as a cohort who leave their initial dispersal location could be sampled. And this analysis could focus upon examining the micro movements of individuals, for example within neighbourhoods, within cities and within regions.

The qualitative element of the cohort study would ensure that issues related to integration, which cannot be easily quantified, would be elucidated. The role of community support, existing ethnic communities and the Scottish context which influence migration decisions could be explored. There is still much to learn about how onward migration of refugees impacts upon long-term integration. It is hoped that this discussion paper will prompt more detailed investigation and analysis.

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