

Report

May 2002

Report on

Asylum Seekers Research

Prepared for

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Contract: 2168

Executive Summary

1. This research study investigated two aspects of Glasgow asylum seekers' lives. The first was the introduction, orientation and advice given to asylum seekers when they first arrived in Glasgow. The second was issues around their training and employment.
2. The study was commissioned by Glasgow City Council on behalf of the ATLAS Equal bid for Scotland. The study was completed by FMR Research Ltd.
3. The methodology comprised face to face interviews with 126 asylum seekers, ten focus group discussions and interviews with representatives from nine organisations and agencies involved with asylum seekers. The asylum seeker interviews and focus groups were conducted in the five most prevalent languages in Glasgow's asylum seeker population. This, combined with a sample structure that involved both genders, a spread of ages and a spread of the length of time they had spent in Glasgow (up to a maximum of 1 year), helped ensure a good representation of the asylum seeker community.
4. Nearly ninety percent of asylum seekers had a positive view of the way they were first treated when they came to the city. On an ascending scale of merit from 1 to 7, the mean score was 5.2. Males were slightly more positive than females and single people slightly more positive than those with families.
5. Asylum seekers mentioned:
 - the personal manner of those looking after them,
 - the quality of the permanent accommodation, and
 - the fact that they were given contact details and information,as good aspects of the way they were treated.
6. Poor aspects about the way that asylum seekers were treated included:
 - lack of information,
 - problems with accommodation/furniture,
 - no interpreter,
 - temporary accommodation, and
 - paperwork on arrival.

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7. Over two thirds of asylum seekers felt that extra information and help should be given when they first arrive in Glasgow. Half of the comments relating to this concerned languages and translation.
 8. Asylum seekers use a combination of formal sources of advice (support organisation, agencies and specialists) and informal sources (fellow countrymen, friends, people in the community). Whilst both types of source were rated positively, both have scope for further development. Problems with formal sources related more to language issues than they did to the content of the information. There appeared to be further scope for the informal sources to become a more deliberate part of the strategy for communicating with asylum seekers.
 9. Personal dialogue is how asylum seekers stated they preferred to receive information and advice. Face to face was the preferred medium, with telephone a second choice by a high margin. Printed information was seen to function in a supporting role.
 10. Over two thirds of asylum seekers interviewed specifically remembered receiving a Welcome Pack. The great majority found it useful. Main shortcomings were when all or some of it was not translated into the asylum seeker's mother tongue and where production quality/copying was poor. There was also an issue about the linguistic ability in those organisations whose contact details were included in the Welcome Pack. The usefulness of the pack could be extended by adding maps, details of buses, details of organisations of the same nationality and translating the English words that remain.
 11. Around eighty percent of those interviewed planned to stay in Glasgow should they get a positive decision on their leave to remain. Heads of household were far more likely to want to stay in Glasgow than non-heads of household.
 12. Around 40% of asylum seekers interviewed were employed or self employed in their former country. Males were far more likely to have worked than females, and heads of household more likely than non-heads of household. There were 34 different occupations mentioned by the asylum seekers who had worked prior to coming to Glasgow. Nearly eighty percent of those commenting said they would like to do the same work in Glasgow as they did in their former country.

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13. Nearly 20% of those interviewed claimed to have qualifications and vocational skills beyond school leaving level prior to coming to Glasgow. Sixty one percent had either undergone, or were undergoing training since coming to Glasgow. Females were more likely to have undergone training since coming to Glasgow than males.
 14. Recent training was dominated by English language training. This was seen as vital for employment prospects in those seeking work and key to the ability to fit and live in local society.
 15. Nearly all asylum seekers interviewed were interested in further training. The two main areas of interest were English language and computers. Around a quarter mentioned a desire for specific vocational training. This embraced over thirty different subjects. Over half saw the reason for further training to help get a job. This was higher in males than females.
 16. Around 80% said they knew whether this training was available. This was higher for English and computing training than it was for vocational subject areas. The research revealed the view that it can be daunting for someone, especially an asylum seeker with limited local knowledge, to successfully identify a training path in line with their aspirations.
 17. There was a big gap between awareness of training and whether people had applied for training. Only a quarter of those interviewed had applied for further training. The main barriers to being able to access training in the future were cited as:
 - poor language skills,
 - child care issues,
 - perceived costs,
 - transport difficulties.

There was also a view, mainly expressed by males, that the decision on the right to stay was key to them taking action on their future development.

18. The research study touched on other issues relevant to asylum seekers' lives. These were concerns about the link between work permits and the leave to remain, the need for agencies working with asylum seekers to continue to work better together, support for smaller asylum seekers communities but with nationality themes, problems with the voucher system and concerns about personal safety. The

research also identified two elements of the asylum seeker population which people felt merit particular attention. These were the under 5s and the 17-24 year olds.

19. The research study identified 14 recommendations on how to further improve the introduction, orientation and advice for, plus the training and development of asylum seekers.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

This report presents the findings of a research study conducted by FMR Research into the experiences and needs of asylum seekers in Glasgow. The study was commissioned by Glasgow City Council in its role as lead partner in the ATLAS Equal bid for Scotland.

The report outlines the objectives of the study, the methodology used by FMR in conducting the research and the research findings, before making recommendations for action.

1.2 Objectives

The research was focused on two particular aspects of asylum seekers' lives in Glasgow. These were first, information, advice and orientation, and second, training and employment.

1.2.1 Information, advice and orientation

This strand of the research focused on the following areas:

- A review of the 'Welcome Pack' provided to asylum seekers by Glasgow City Council on arrival in the city. How it could be improved. Asylum seekers', who have been accommodated by the City Council, views on their experience of using the pack and how useful it was. The views of those who have been accommodated elsewhere on whether or not it would have been of value to them. Views on other information that should be incorporated into the pack, in addition to comments on the format and presentation.
- How the orientation process more generally can be improved for asylum seekers arriving and settling in Glasgow. What kind of problems did they have and where did they obtain information and advice? Are these sources of information and advice satisfactory?
- The medium through which they would prefer to receive information – in writing, through face to face communication, by telephone, through a website?

1.2.2 Training and employment

Equal makes resources available for information, orientation, advice, training and employment – the spectrum of issues which will ultimately enable the target group to enter paid employment. The ATLAS Development Partnership has been asked to focus upon the softer skills. However, if there are key priorities identified by asylum seekers in relation to training and employment which go beyond “soft skills” or English Language training then the Development Partnership would make a case for using the resources to fund training and employment initiatives. Accordingly, interviews explored:

- What type of training are asylum seekers looking for when they arrive in the city and in the months following their arrival?
- In the longer term what are asylum seekers’ aspirations in terms of training and employment?

1.3 How findings are presented

The main three sections of this report present the research findings. The first two are devoted to the two main research strands (‘information, orientation, advice’ and ‘training and employment’). The third section reports findings outwith these two strands, but still relevant to improving the lives of asylum seekers in the city.

The content of each of the sections draws on the results from the three research components, namely, the one to one interviews with asylum seekers, focus groups with asylum seekers and interviews with stakeholders.

Where relevant, findings are presented with distinctions made between nationality of asylum seeker, age, gender, status in household, landlord of property, and length of time in the city.

Following the three sections on research findings are the recommendations which have emerged from the study. This shows the suggested changes to and areas for attention in the current arrangements for asylum seekers.

The methodology used by FMR is described in the next section.

2 Methodology

The research had three main components:

- one to one interviews with asylum seekers;
- focus groups with asylum seekers; and
- interviews with representatives from stakeholder organisations.

The research was conducted during February and March 2002.

2.1 One to one interviews with asylum seekers

The community of interest were asylum seekers who had been in Glasgow for up to one year, such that there was a relatively fresh experience of the introduction process, and the process included many of the developments and improvements made since the earlier days of asylum seekers arriving in Glasgow. Interviews were conducted with 126 asylum seekers (target number, 120). The interviews were based on a semi-structured questionnaire of thirty-three questions, which included profile details of the interviewee, questions on information, orientation and advice, and questions on employment. Personal details such as name, address, and phone numbers were not asked for as experience has shown the request for these to have a detrimental effect on the interviewer building sufficient trust with the respondent in order to elicit useful data.

With the agreement of Glasgow City Council, interviews were conducted in each of the five most common languages of Glasgow's asylum seeker population. This enabled the research to encompass the nationalities that make up the majority of the local asylum seeker population. The five languages were Albanian, Arabic, Farsi, Kurdish and Somali. These covered the following six nationalities, Albanian, Arabian, Iranian, Iraqi, Kurdish, and Somali.

The research sample was split equally between the five languages with an equal number of males and females. Each of the researchers worked to ensure the people that comprised their part of the sample were spread across the age and time-in-Glasgow spectrum. The fieldwork was conducted by interpreters from the Global Language Services team, who were able to conduct interviews in the native tongue of the asylum seekers. For the most part this comprised male interpreters to conduct the interviews with the male asylum seekers and female interpreters to conduct the interviews with females.

A copy of the questionnaire is appended.

2.2 Focus groups with asylum seekers

Small focus groups were conducted with ten groups of asylum seekers. Once again the community of interest was asylum seekers who had been resident in Glasgow for up to one year. The purpose of the focus groups was to explore some of the research issues in more detail. The groups were conducted in the language of the asylum seekers and followed an agreed topic guide.

The ten focus groups covered each of the five languages used in this study and both genders.

2.3 Stakeholder interviews

The third component of the research was ten interviews with representatives from stakeholder organisations and agencies. These people were invited to participate on the strength of their involvement in and/or perspective on asylum seeker issues. Interviews were conducted face to face to an agreed topic guide. The organisations participating were:

- Anniesland College
- Asylum Support Service – Health and Service Management
- Bridge the Gap
- Castlemilk Churches Together
- Education Department
- Fire Service
- Scottish Refugee Council, One Stop Shop
- Social Work
- Strathclyde Police.

The research findings are presented in the next three sections.

3 Information, Orientation and Advice

This section presents the main findings concerning the information, orientation and advice to asylum seekers when they first arrive in Glasgow.

3.1 Overall rating of the introduction

The majority of asylum seekers (87%, 110 respondents) had a positive view of the way that they were first treated when they came to the city.

On a scale of 1 to 7, where 1 is very poorly and 7 is very well, the mean score given by asylum seekers was 5.2. This showed a high degree of satisfaction with the way that people perceive they were looked after. All nationalities of asylum seekers interviewed were positive in their rating of how they were treated when they first came to Glasgow.

Males (5.3, 63 respondents) were marginally more positive than females (5.0, 63 respondents) and single people (5.34, 32 respondents) more positive than those with families (5.1, 94 respondents).

The sections below explore what was good and poor about the initial introduction to Glasgow, but it must be noted that the circumstances beyond the control of the local asylum support infrastructure can taint asylum seekers views, as indicated by the following two sentiments.

“Very poor, not that something is wrong with people but I was in the very bad mood, and then someone has to answer! Three months I have been detained.”

“I was depressed because of the situation in my country.”

3.2 Good and poor aspects, when they first arrived

3.2.1 Good aspects

When asked whether there was anything particularly good about the way they were looked after when they first arrived in Glasgow, 79% (99 respondents) said yes and 21% (27 respondents) said no. Again, single people seemed to be more positive than those with

families and males more positive than females. The main themes to their answers about what was good were:

- personal manner and approach of those looking after (64%, 63 respondents);
- good accommodation/furniture (37%, 37 respondents); and
- given contact details/telephone numbers (10%, 10 respondents).

3.2.2 Poor aspects

When asked whether there was anything particularly poor about the way they were treated when they first arrived in Glasgow, around half (60 respondents) said yes. The four main categories of what people thought was poor were as follows:

- lack of information (36% of comments, 20 respondents)
- problems with accommodation/furniture (30% of comments, 17 respondents)
- no interpreter (23% of comments, 13 respondents)
- temporary accommodation (20% of comments, 11 respondents)
- paperwork on arrival (14% of comments, 8 respondents).

3.2.3 The appetite for extra information

In addition to the views about what was good and what was poor when they first arrived, over two thirds of asylum seekers believed that there should be extra information or help given to asylum seekers when they first arrive in Glasgow. Half the comments or suggestions that asylum seekers made in relation to this concerned translation and interpretation. This included information on transport, schools, places of worship and health services, all translated or provided through dialogue in the asylum seeker's language.

3.3 Areas for potential development

Accepting asylum seekers' overall perception that the way they were treated when they first arrived was good, this research study included the objective of learning how the introduction process could be developed. This section looks in further detail into the areas within the introduction, orientation, advice process that asylum seekers thought could be improved.

3.3.1 Paperwork on arrival

Fourteen percent (8 respondents) of comments about what was poor when people first arrived related to the initial processes around paperwork. Asylum seekers' views included the following sentiments.

"The process is taking long hours. When I came at first we are held for long hours at the distribution point."

"I am not taken to my flat, but have to wait for hours for re-processing and paper work."

"The arrival process takes a long time and tiring."

"When I arrived in Glasgow, I was not taken to my flat, but was taken to a reception centre for hours for processing and paper work and I was hungry and tired."

3.3.2 Personal manner and approach

More asylum seekers mentioned feeling well treated and taken care of by people as a good element of their introduction and orientation process than any other factor. There were several ingredients that contributed to asylum seekers feeling treated well and taken care of. These included courtesy, friendliness, and helpfulness as well as accepting that it takes time for people to adjust, settle in and overcome the ordeal of the journey.

"The accompanied man was very helpful although we didn't understand his language but he managed to explain to us how to use the hoover also he exchanged the voucher for us and left police number if any emergency arose."

"Everything was planned and there was no ill treatment, they were very humane when dealing with us. They did their best in comforting us by explaining everything clearly."

"They carried our suitcases, asked if I liked the apartment, pleasant people treated us well."

"When we arrived at the reception centre it was raining I went out to smoke a cigarette a man kindly approached and told me it is better to stand under the shelter to avoid being wet, it was good behaviour and very kind."

"The person looking after us was very reassuring telling me not to worry, and I will settle in fine."

"Myself and my wife were the only people on the bus and we thought we are reaching the end of the planet, and we felt that we could trust the people who looked after us and that was due to their help and understanding of our situation which was very important."

These positive sentiments need to be contrasted with less encouraging experiences of treatment and care. These intimate the areas where improvement is possible.

"The agent left very shortly, he didn't explain much and I never see him again."

“On arrival the interpreter was short of time and didn’t explain addresses correctly and only showed us the post office where to get the vouchers. I had a feeling the social workers wanted to just let us be as quick as possible in case we don’t like home.”

“Before going out of reception centre for smoking a cigarette I was going to go out and smoke that, suddenly a man approached to me with a bad tone told me not to smoke cigarette here.”

“They lied to us saying that you are going to stay at a hotel for three days but we spent more than 10 days in bad condition.”

Key to making further improvements around treatment and care is the ability to spend time with asylum seekers in this early stage, being accurate with information, and human courtesy.

3.3.3 Lack of information

Thirty six percent of comments (20 respondents) about what asylum seekers thought was poor when they first arrived in Glasgow related to lack of information. Lack of information covered issues where information provided may be perceived as inaccurate, incomplete or not supported by an infrastructure to handle responses.

*“The Welcome Pack is useless, no answer to phone numbers, info either incorrect or a lie”.
“I expected more information on addresses and how to access information but they left me to deal with problems and find a countryman to ask for help.”*

“I realised the interpreter there on arrival was not doing her job as a professional, the interpreter was not giving me all the information correctly as they were told to me by the social worker...”

It also picks up areas where printed information is not presented in the appropriate language.

“The main problem was the language. I was given addresses of everywhere but I didn’t know how to find them.”

“We needed information on how to get around Glasgow, how to get to health centres etc, (in Kurdish).

“The problem was we didn’t know any place in Glasgow, e.g. post offices to get our weekly vouchers, GP, dentist.”

“They sent someone with us, give us telephone numbers for police, health centres, schools and breakfast pack and Welcome Pack, but it was in Arabic.”

“I found some information about hospitals, and schools, but it was in Arabic.”

3.3.4 No interpreter

Twenty three percent (13 respondents) of comments about poor aspects on arrival related to issues around interpretation. It includes frustration about the lack of interpretation services.

“Interpreter wasn’t available to me to tell me how to exchange my vouchers. I was crying trying to tell how hungry my daughter and I were but nobody understood me.”

“No interpreter available in our Kurdish language”

“Not having interpreter led me to give the NHS form to the concierge to post away for me, I have heard nothing since.”

“Can’t read the Welcome Pack properly. No interpreter came to show places (health centre, school, police, shop).”

“An interpreter should be present and most people arrive at night and I think they need an experienced interpreter who has been living in Glasgow for a long time to explain a lot of issues on day time and show me the neighbourhood.”

“A person who can speak the Somali language to work with the support team.”

“Many problems, language difficulty, and where I can spend my vouchers, it was all in English, and if there was an interpreter available on arrival and could have explained it to me, I would have felt much more comfortable.”

“There was no interpreter, we were new to the area and we don’t know the language, although they give us the Welcome Pack and some useful telephone numbers, but we were not able to make use of them, I contacted the concierge of the building to solve my problem.”

A focus group conducted with Somali speaking men, showed there appeared to be a lack of advice or information, and indicated this was probably a product of the lack of Somali language skills in support organisations and agencies.

3.3.5 Frustration with temporary accommodation

Problems with accommodation included some specifically around temporary accommodation. Temporary accommodation was widely perceived to be inferior to permanent accommodation. The following views help illustrate.

“Because after we arrived we were taken to a guest house. It was damp, dirty and in a bad place. Even them that came was surprised about the state.”

“Bad accommodation, sharing one bathroom and kitchen with seven families. There was no privacy and four people had to stay in one bedroom with children.”

“When we came to Glasgow after a long and tiring journey, we were not taken to our flats for a long time we have to wait in an enclosure area for processing and paper work. Some people taken to hotels with no cooking facilities.”

“Information and conditions in the hostel, the food was very poor.”

“Sending us to an awful and dirty guest house and staying there for 21 days.”

3.3.6 Accommodation/furniture – permanent accommodation

When people comment positively about the accommodation, they tended to refer to Council allocated flats. Thirty seven percent of the ‘good aspects on arrival’ related to this. Some comments related to the physical aspects of the property.

“The condition of the house was good and the furniture was new. As a whole the standard of living was great.”

“I was psychologically unhappy to come to Glasgow because of its reputation until I saw the condition of the house which we made me very happy.”

They also referred to the provision of food.

“We are given food and flat with most things inside like furniture and utensils.”

“We are taken to our flats and food given to us.”

However, comments about Council flats included 30% (17 respondents) of views on what was poor when asylum seekers arrived in Glasgow. This included problems with the condition and specification of allocated flats.

“The flat is cool and many things are missing.”

“They don’t come back to us and solve the problem that we have, like heating, no hot water, no washing machine.”

“The flat was so dirty.”

They also contained issues about the location of the property.

“The house we were given was a boarded house. The only known Kurdish family for us was more than half an hour distance from the house, while we requested to be as close as possible to them.”

“Each night our flat door was knocked loudly the glass of the door was smashed.”

Kurdish speaking males told of their concerns for their safety in a focus group, as the area in which they were accommodated was ‘wild and dangerous’, and often the asylum seekers met with hostility, and violence, while some had suffered attacks.

3.3.7 Issues with linking into health services, schools etc

There are frustrations around the ability of the city’s public sector infrastructure to accommodate asylum seekers. These comments were made mainly by women.

“I have a son, I have registered him in a nursery which is near our flat and after a few months, the Head Teacher refused to accept him because we are asylum seekers and she sent him to another nursery which, as she said is for asylum seekers and refugees.”

“We arrived in Glasgow in May and therefore our children lost an entire year of study. Children never started school until August of the same year.”

“I received bad treatment at emergency department at Victoria hospital for my children.”

“Problems accessing college to register, 2- 3 months waiting list to register.”

“Job centres don’t help asylum seekers until you are a refugee.”

Through focus groups Somali women expressed concern for their children over incidents of racial abuse from fellow pupils, while Farsi speaking females had much difficulty in obtaining a nursery place for their children, on grounds of lack of availability and status. Arabic speaking women commented on similar problems, particularly in enrolling children into school because of no authorisation.

3.3.8 Issues with shops and vouchers

Frustrations with the voucher system are well known. Some asylum seekers gave their views about the practical application of the system, and what they would wish to be improved about it.

“The problem was we didn’t know any place in Glasgow, e.g. post office to get our weekly vouchers, GP, dentist, we didn’t even know that when we buy something, we need to buy up to the value of £5 as change will not be given.”

“The shops names were written and maps were drawn, they gave me enough food for one day and I had difficulty finding the shops for three days, I was hungry, address finding was very difficult for me, and it was a problem.”

“I do not know where to go, I find difficulty in which shops take vouchers.”

“When I arrived I was given vouchers, but only a very small number of shops in the area take them, and they didn’t give back any change.”

A focus group held with Somali speaking women showed discontent with the voucher system, as there is a restricted selection, no change is given, and there are indications of malpractice on the part of shopkeepers who inflate their prices. Similarly, Kurdish women discussed further problems with the voucher system, in that the vouchers were mostly in the name of the husband, or head of the household, which meant both husband and wife had to shop together, a role traditionally seen as “women’s work”. However, it is not just female respondents who reported problems with the voucher system, Farsi speaking men said they found the vouchers to be embarrassing, and problematic as they receive no change, leaving them with no cash for transport or bills.

3.4 Sources of advice

3.4.1 Use of different advice sources

Asylum seekers were asked to state the sources of advice they used and to indicate the main one. The table below shows the various sources mentioned by the asylum seekers, the main source and the perceived usefulness of the main source on a scale of 1 to 7, where 1 is very poor and 7 is excellent.

Source	As main source of advice	All people mentioning this source	Usefulness rating (1 to 7 scale)
Fellow countrymen	21% (26 respondents)	21% (26 respondents)	6.2
Refugee Council	18% (23 respondents)	37% (46 respondents)	5.0
Asylum Support Team	17% (22 respondents)	28% (35 respondents)	5.5
Friends	15% (19 respondents)	21% (27 respondents)	5.1
Solicitor	12% (15 respondents)	25% (32 respondents)	5.3
Community	10% (12 respondents)	22% (28 respondents)	6.0
Concierge	2% (3 respondents)	13% (16 respondents)	too few mentions
Interpreter	2% (2 respondents)	5% (6 respondents)	too few mentions
City Council	1% (1 respondent)	3% (4 respondents)	too few mentions
College	1% (1 respondent)	4% (5 respondents)	too few mentions

3.4.2 Formal and informal sources

All sources mentioned as used by asylum seekers rated positively (all averaged five or over on a seven point scale of ascending merit). This is encouraging data for the agencies and organisations working with asylum seekers.

The results suggested two types of information sources, formal and informal. The formal sources are the statutory bodies, agencies and technical specialists. This includes the Scottish Refugee Council, the Asylum Support Team and solicitors. Informal sources include fellow countrymen, friends and the community.

3.4.3 Issues of linguistic ability with formal information sources

Comments about the formal information sources related more to language issues than the content of the information.

“No interpreter present, only on Tuesdays, most times waste of journey and we can’t understand each other, they give us information in English, that we can’t understand each other.”

“No matter what help we are getting from friends the help remains very limited. We can’t go to the Scottish Refugee Council or National Asylum Support, because they don’t have Kurdish interpreters available.”

“We need an interpreter to be available in these places. They don’t provide any help in this matter.”

“Will be better if Kurdish interpreter is available to assist us.”

“In Asylum Support Team, it depends who answers when I phone, sometimes they help you, but sometimes not at all.”

The point about organisations and agencies to which asylum seekers are signposted having linguistic capacity was made earlier. These views reinforce the importance of this.

3.4.4 The strength of informal sources

The main point around informal information sources is asylum seekers’ affinity with them despite information being available through formal channels. Potential might exist for these media to be a more deliberate part of the asylum seeker settlement strategy.

“I was lucky to know some friends who helped me when arrived in Glasgow, other asylum seekers were stuck because they don’t have friends or helpers.”

“We didn’t know where we can find the services we need until we asked the Somalis who came before us.”

“With regards to finding an address, I had to ask fellow countrymen.”

“I have met Albanian people, and they advise me where to go.”

“It is more understandable to ask the Somalis for advice and information.”

“My friends have been here longer than me, and they know more or less everything that I might want to know about.”

“When we were dispersed from London in our hotel we were among friends we already knew and we were on the bus together coming to Glasgow and when we got located to our houses we were all scattered all over the city.”

“To notify me of where I can meet Iranian nationality (what area). On arrival to strange city and country, house very lonely, difficulties with language barrier, racial abuse risks, introduction to another Iranian could be helpful, and give me comparisons.”

“We were accompanied by a helpful lady and she didn’t leave us alone until she introduced us to another Kurdish family which made our life easier.”

A focus group conducted with Somali speaking males showed that these asylum seekers preferred to receive advice through their Somali community, and obtain information from Somalis who had arrived earlier. Albanian females said they also made contacts with other Albanian speakers, but found the Albanian speaker on the Asylum Support Team very helpful, while the group of Kurdish women relied on friends within their own community for early advice.

A group of Farsi speaking men indicated through a focus group that they would prefer to be placed in accommodation close to their fellow countrymen so as to secure their advice and support. In reality they were placed in a rough area far from their friends and relatives. A similar view is held by Albanian speaking women who claim on arrival they were very concerned, until they met other Albanians who were able to explain various things to them.

3.4.5 Medium of advice

People were asked how they prefer to receive information and advice. They were presented with four options and an ‘other, please state’ option. The results are shown below. The main assertion from the ‘other, please state’ option is that the communication must be in the language of the asylum seeker (either in print or through an interpreter).

- face to face 83% (105 respondents)
- by telephone 27% (34 respondents)
- in writing 23% (29 respondents)
- from a website 3% (4 respondents).

The dominant preference is for dialogue, either face to face or by telephone. But, despite this overall result there were some distinctions between various elements of the sample of asylum seekers interviewed. Females were even more emphatic in their preference for face to face information than males. The only one of the six nationalities to prefer information in

writing was Arabic. A focus group with Albanian males showed that information was mostly available through contacts within the Albanian community, but also accessed through the Scottish Refugee Council. These thoughts were shared by Farsi speaking men, who found the Asylum Support Team very helpful, yet ideally would wish to receive information face to face either via an interpreter or from a Farsi speaker.

3.5 Welcome Pack

A specific part of the research was concerned with the Welcome Pack. The Welcome Pack is part of the support provided to asylum seekers dispersed through Glasgow City Council. These are the majority, but not all, of asylum seekers coming to Glasgow.

3.5.1 Penetration of the Welcome Pack

When those who stated they were living in Glasgow Council accommodation were questioned, over two thirds (62 respondents) said they had received a Welcome Pack. Some weren't sure whether they received one or not and 7% (6 respondents) were clear that they didn't receive one.

The people who believed they did not receive a Welcome Pack comprised Iraqi, Iranian and Albanian nationalities. Those who were not sure whether they received one or not were more likely to have been in Scotland for a shorter length of time than those who were confident they received one. This could be explained by those who had been in the country for shorter lengths of time being perhaps confused or unclear about what they had and hadn't been supplied with.

3.5.2 Use of the Welcome Pack

The research asked about the frequency and nature of asylum seekers' use of the Welcome Pack. When asked how often people used it, the findings were as follows:

- refer to it when needed, 45% (40 respondents)
- read on arrival, 24% (21 respondents)
- read a few times, 20% (18 respondents)
- didn't use, 11% (10 respondents)

When asked how long they used it for, people said:

- for a short time, 23% (18 respondents)
- 2-3 weeks, 18% (14 respondents)
- 1 month, 16% (13 respondents)
- 2-3 months, 15% (12 respondents)
- still use it, 28% (22 respondents)

The data suggested the Welcome Pack had a useful life of about one month for the majority, but with about a quarter of asylum seekers continuing to use the pack after several months. The one nationality which seemed distinctive in its use of the Welcome Pack were Somalis, where no-one interviewed claimed to use it beyond three weeks. This might be due to the sample not having the Somali version of the pack. The focus group with Somali females discovered that they had Welcome Packs that were not translated into Somali, as a result they had difficulty coping with most of the entries and the packs were rarely used.

The focus groups also reinforced the earlier point about organisations to whom asylum seekers are signposted by the Welcome Pack needing linguistic skills in order to handle the enquiries.

3.5.3 Usefulness of the Welcome Pack

The great majority found it useful. When asked what they found useful about the pack, people said.

- all information/generally useful, 70% (62 respondents)
- addresses and telephone numbers, 16% (14 respondents)
- information on education, 16% (14 respondents)

-
- information on health, 13% (12 respondents)

Eighty one percent (66 respondents) found the pack easy to use. Where difficulties were expressed these related to poor quality copying which obscured some of the detail and the (parts of the) packs that had not been translated from English.

3.5.4 Extra information for the Welcome Pack

When asked if they thought any information was missing, 34% (43 respondents) made specific comments which were grouped into the main headings below:

- maps (40%, 17 respondents)
- information on buses (23%, 10 respondents)
- information on organisations of the same nationality (19%, 8 respondents)
- translations of English words (16%, 7 respondents)

Specific comments about extra information included the following:

“Information was good, just for reading, but not practical.”

“So many details available like phone numbers and addresses, but we still couldn’t find our way to these places.”

“Although the pack is written in Somali, you cannot use it unless you speak English.”

“I like the amount of information concerning every service, but I dislike the pack as it does not contain any information about worship places or entertainment places.”

“There were no road directions, maps to supermarkets, or GPs, or bus numbers to city centre.”

“More information on places to go for fun like parks, or exercise/fitness centres.”

“Pack should contain more information on places of entertainment for children.”

“Should have information on where the Halal shops are.”

“It should provide information on how to access legal aid.”

More information regarding the Welcome Packs was revealed by means of focus groups, two of which were conducted in the Albanian language, with both males and females. These asylum seekers said that most of the information in the pack was useful, but particularly because it was translated into the Albanian language, while Farsi speaking men claimed the pack was useful when they first arrived, but now they prefer to rely on friends for advice and information. Arabic speaking women also found the Welcome Pack useful, especially for GP’s, dentists, schools and colleges but required more information on things like accessing cash, how to pay for transport, and the expiry date of vouchers.

From a focus group conducted with Kurdish speaking males it appears that more details about Glasgow should be included in the Welcome Pack. This should include information about attractions, and leisure centres which asylum seekers find especially difficult to access. The pack should also include more information about housing in the area.

Certain colleges have commented that the Welcome Pack was not adequate in that, from an education point of view, people were not told where the educational institutions are, and if they find that one college is full, they are not sure where else to try.

4 Training and Employment

This section summarises those findings of the research concerned with the training and employment of asylum seekers.

4.1 Vocational background

4.1.1 Intention to stay in Glasgow

Seventy percent (68 respondents) said that they planned to stay in Glasgow after they received their decision. There was no discernable pattern across the age groups, nor was there in relation to length of time spent in the city. However heads of household (whether single or with families) were far more likely (81%, 65 respondents) than non-heads of household (51%, 23 respondents) to plan to stay in Glasgow. The majority of all nationalities involved in this research study expressed the intent to stay in Glasgow.

4.1.2 Occupation in their former countries

When asked about occupation in their former country, the biggest categories in their declared working status were:

- employed/self employed (40%, 44 respondents)
- housewife (30%, 38 respondents)
- student (13%, 17 respondents)
- unemployed (10%, 12 respondents)

There were no discernable differences between age bands with respect to asylum seekers having done paid work in their former country. Males were more likely to have worked (48%, 30 respondents) than females (19%, 12 respondents). Heads of household (whether with family or not) were more likely to have worked (41%, 81 respondents) than non-heads of household (20%, 9 respondents). Data from the focus groups reinforced the findings that females were less likely to have been in paid work, and some added that they were also anticipating little change to this status. This appeared to be a cultural aspect of their lives in their former countries.

Within those doing paid work in their former country, 34 different occupations were mentioned with no one single occupation accounting for more than six people. This suggested a broad spread of vocational backgrounds. A list of occupations is appended.

4.1.3 Future intentions with regards to work

Nearly eighty percent of those responding (45 respondents) said they would like to do the same work in Glasgow as they were doing in their former country. There was little difference between nationality, gender, length of time in Glasgow and status in household in this regard.

Whilst this may be encouraging for those with skills which suit the Glasgow economy, it does give a 're-orientation' challenge not just in skills but also in attitude for those where there is a gap between their prior occupation and local opportunities.

4.2 Training

4.2.1 Previous training and qualifications

We asked about people's qualifications from their own country. Twenty two percent (27 respondents) of people said they had qualifications. There was a broad spread in the types of qualifications. The information below shows main groupings of these:

- school level, 3 respondents
- college and university, 10 respondents
- work based learning, 9 respondents
- vocational courses, 5 respondents

Some asylum seekers seemed to have answered this question stating the skills they had, rather than the qualifications. Also some respondents may have assumed the question meant qualifications beyond school level. Of those with skills and qualifications, 19% (24 respondents) considered themselves to have qualifications and vocational skills beyond school leaving level.

4.2.2 Training since being in Glasgow

Sixty one percent (77 respondents) were either undergoing or had undergone training since arriving in Glasgow.

The training done was dominated by English language training (95%, 73 respondents). The only other type of training which was mentioned by more than one person was computing (16%, 12 respondents). There was no discernable difference between length of time in Glasgow and the uptake of training. Females were noticeably more likely to have undergone training since arriving in Glasgow (73%, 46 respondents) than males (49%, 31 respondents).

Data from the focus groups reinforced that most asylum seekers were undertaking English language training. Both the male and female Farsi speaking groups were all involved in English training. Another focus group was conducted with Arabic speaking women, and all of them were involved in studying English. One commented on how mixing with British students, not just asylum seekers, was helping her to integrate into society. Another perspective that emerged from the focus groups was that attending training was 'something to do' and a way of keeping busy.

4.2.3 Aspirations regarding training

Nearly all (117 respondents) the asylum seekers interviewed were interested in (additional) training. The two main areas of interest are English language training (44%, 52 respondents) and computers (27%, 32 respondents). Over thirty other categories of training were mentioned. A list of these other types of training is appended. The vast majority had a vocational focus. Males and heads of household were more likely to want vocational subjects than females and non heads of household.

Those who were employed in their former country were more likely to want vocational training, and the appetite for English training was reasonably uniform across all previous occupation categories. Although the numbers of previously unemployed people in the survey were small, they had the greatest interest in computer training.

Whilst not necessarily an obvious training area, focus group discussions raised the possibility of classes (or similar) to help asylum seekers become acquainted with the customs and practices of Glasgow/Scottish life.

4.2.4 Why they would like to do this training

When asked why people would like this training, the main reasons were:

- to get a job 56% (58 respondents)
- to make it easier to communicate 15% (15 respondents)
- as an interest/hobby 10% (10 respondents)
- it's what I did in my own country 7% (7 respondents)
- to improve my IT skills 5% (5 respondents).

Over half saw the need for training as part of the path to possible employment. This comprised a higher proportion of males than females. The majority of those interested in computer training and around half those interested in further English training saw the purpose of this to get a job. The other main motivation for further English training was to make it easier to communicate.

The comments that asylum seekers made in relation to training needs included the following.

To get a job

"I would like to live in Glasgow and wherever I live, I consider it to be my society, and I want to pay my debt to society, the society here has done so much for me, I would like to become a professional and earn money to pay taxes."

"There is a need for me to find work, and I would like to specialize in this country's professionalism in civil engineering."

"To get a job and become one of this nation, to pay tax and develop my life."

"Because I can have a future in computing."

Language – to make life easier

"Because I want to live here and I need to be able to communicate."

"I would like to communicate at a professional level."

"It will make my life easier if I learn the language of this country."

"To communicate with people and to be able to do things without my interpreter."

Other reasons

"In order to be able to use the internet and to have up to date IT skills."

"To become computer literate."

"I am settled in this country so I need to learn the computer to have up to date skills in IT."

“Learning to drive, for work reasons and personal, getting to a workplace would be an advantage going by car.”

“I have lots of interests in welding.”

4.2.5 Awareness of training

Around 80% (93 respondents) said they knew whether this training was available in Glasgow. Nearly 90% of those interested in English or computing training knew whether the training was available. The biggest gap between training type and comprehension of training availability related to job-focused training. Here 31% (11 respondents) who were interested in a particular type of training were not sure whether it was available.

Social workers have commented on the employment aspirations of the asylum seekers, and how they cover a wide range of abilities. At the lower end there are those with literacy problems and at the other end, architects, doctors, etc. However there is a danger that they are a target group to be ripped off, such as paying them below the minimum wage, and also working on the black economy, while the training aspirations are the same as the general community. The Scottish Refugee Council believes those who can, are desperate to work, and if we give them a push, they will take off. A very high percentage are highly educated, and wish to contribute to Glasgow (through their employed work and their citizenship). This view is shared by the colleges, who appreciate that asylum seekers are highly motivated, and are desperate to become professionally qualified. In addition, one stakeholder offered a belief that all asylum seekers come with the attitude that education is very important, however some employment aspirations may be dashed as many people will not have sufficient language skills needed to get the necessary grades, as this takes a number of years.

4.2.6 Applications for further training

The data showed a significant gap between asylum seekers' overall awareness of training opportunities, and their enrolling on the training.

Twenty-four percent (28 respondents) had applied for the training, and the majority (76%, 90 respondents) had not. There was no discernable difference between the length of time in the country and whether people had applied for the training, suggesting there is more of a barrier to action than familiarity through time.

4.2.7 Barriers to training

Sixty seven percent (80 respondents) perceived barriers to being able to participate in training. The main barriers cited were:

- poor language skills 45% (36 respondents)
- lack of child care 29% (23 respondents)
- perceived expense 28% (22 respondents)
- transport issues 14% (11 respondents)

The perceived presence of barriers grew with the length of time that asylum seekers had spent in Glasgow. This may suggest that asylum seekers increased understanding of the local asylum seeker infrastructure makes them more aware of restrictions around what they can or cannot do. Perceived barriers to training were lower in single people than non-single people and higher with females than males.

Language

“Without an interpreter the course would be impossible.”

“Because I am an illiterate person, I would need to start from ABC which means starting from scratch.”

Child Care

"I have a small baby, the colleges are mostly reluctant to look after the children."

"I would love to attend English courses and sewing training, but no child care is available for my young son."

"Sometimes having children makes it difficult to study."

"I am a single father and most colleges in my area haven't places for parents with children."

"Will be very good if a centre available to teach us both the language and the training with child care facilities."

Expense

"The cost because we are having only £10 cash per week."

"If it is very expensive, money that supports me at the moment won't allow me to do so."

"That's if government would at least pay all or some of my tuition fees."

Transport

"Of course I need to know if these courses are free, and if other facilities like transport are offered or not."

"There is a barrier as I can't afford it because of expensive public transport."

There were some other reasons given, some of which were geared around people feeling 'in-limbo' until they had received their decision. These views came mainly from males, for example

"I think that once I got my work permit I need to do work part time, anything to make myself conditions to do my studying"

"If my asylum application is god willing successful I will not allow any barriers to interfere with my main wish. That's if the government would at least pay all or some of my tuition fee, the rest I will be responsible for."

"Result in asylum application and nothing else."

The concern expressed earlier that development paths might be confusing for asylum seekers was supported by some of the answers to this question.

"Still don't know to which office I have to apply to get a grant."

"I don't have any information about the possible training."

These barriers to training were echoed in a focus group, conducted with Albanian speaking females, the majority of whom wished to work to improve their standard of living, but were

very concerned about having to pay their own expenses, and the provision of childcare. Albanian speaking males claimed they were not sure of the opportunities available to them since arriving in Glasgow, while females speaking Farsi, claimed they anticipated cost, transport, childcare, and status to be their main barriers to training.

The views of asylum seekers themselves is supported by some of the organisations and agencies interviewed. It was pointed out that being aware of the pathways to follow to access training can itself be a barrier, as it can be difficult enough for local/English speaking people to navigate. Asylum seekers need correspondingly higher support to help them follow the route. Others suggested the biggest problem to be childcare, which prevents parents attending classes.

A concern, post decision, for asylum seekers is a perceived dilemma surrounding poorly paid work. If they declare their earnings they can be made to leave the accommodation provided, but often their work is insecure and not paying enough for them to pay rent.

5 Further issues

The interviews with agencies and organisations, together with interviews and focus groups with asylum seekers, revealed other issues and ideas geared around improving the lives of and prospects for asylum seekers in Glasgow. These are presented below, in no particular order of importance.

5.1 Work permits

Only two of the asylum seekers interviewed were in paid work, yet there is a big appetite for the asylum seeker community for work. Some believed there to be merit in having permission to work as a separate decision to the leave to remain, as suggested by the following views.

“Reducing the length of time allowed for asylum seekers to start finding jobs.”

“Work permits to be provided for those who have been in this country for more than 6 months.”

5.2 Agencies working together

Most organisations/agencies suggested the need for greater co-ordination between the members of the asylum seeker support infrastructure.

The general feeling from stakeholders was that a more structured approach to accommodating asylum seekers from the beginning would have been beneficial. While people accepted that Glasgow has made significant strides in its support for asylum seekers over the past two years, hindsight would indicate that more deliberation and coordination at the outset would have been desirable.

With regards to the future, stakeholders commented that the arrival and integration process could be assisted, mainly by better integrating services across the board, making sure service providers are talking to each other and ensuring all the different initiatives tie into the overall strategy. The fire service also commented on how its earlier integration could have benefited asylum seekers. It is claimed there was not enough direct liaison with groups representing asylum seekers, and the fire service had to pass their advice and information through Glasgow City Council, rather than communicating directly with the asylum seekers.

Colleges believed that more meetings with major bodies should have been held before the arrival of the asylum seekers. In this way they could have been better prepared, as further education establishments were not ready, and childcare was also overlooked.

5.3 Smaller asylum seeker communities

The views from asylum seekers noted earlier supported grouping of asylum seekers by nationality. There are around 30 nationalities with splits within a nationality group, for example, in the Iraqi community there are different religious groups. This needs to be coupled with the wish of the majority of asylum seekers to become integrated within Scottish society.

5.4 Groups meriting particular attention

Two asylum seeker groups were identified by stakeholders as needing particular support and attention. This means approaches and resources different to those currently offered to the broader asylum seeker societies. These two groups were pre-fives and 17 to 24 year olds. The issues around particular support for pre-fives were voiced by the asylum seeker in their comments about the ability to access training. Stakeholder interviews mentioned the 17 – 24 year old asylum seekers who have the combination of young persons' needs/ characteristics and those of asylum seekers.

5.5 Voucher system

Frustrations about the voucher system were raised in the asylum seeker interviews and illuminated in the focus groups. Females expressed a view that shopping was 'women's work' and having the vouchers in the name of the husband meant husbands had to be present when shopping. This was not a satisfactory arrangement to either gender. There was a general concern about the narrow range of shops taking vouchers and a reduced range of products being available for voucher purchase. Some felt that retailers inflated prices for voucher purchases and the absence of monetary change made purchases feel even more expensive to asylum seekers.

5.6 Personal safety and abuse

Both interviews and focus groups mentioned issues around personal safety. These ranged from incidents of direct physical attack, abuse directed at asylum seekers, racial abuse aimed at asylum seekers children at school and in the locality near their home, knives being put through the letterboxes in their homes and window being broken.

Asylum seekers described the areas in which their new home was based as 'wild and dangerous' and ones in which the residents 'don't like foreigners'.

Despite the resultant fear and anger felt by asylum seekers, their attitude towards this was almost one of resignation. No-one suggested any actions to help make the situation any better and some stated that they deliberately did not take the incidents any further for fear of amplifying the situation.

6 Recommendations

This final section gives the recommendations following the research study in relation to the information, orientation, advice and the training and employment of asylum seekers. The research revealed far more positive points than negative ones in the way Glasgow welcomes and embraces asylum seekers coming to the city, yet it did reveal areas where further improvement is needed.

1. Linguistic capability

The main area for developing the introduction and orientation of asylum seekers to Glasgow relates to being able to communicate in their own languages. Dialogue was shown as the main medium that asylum seekers preferred for the communication of information.

The local situation is exacerbated by the proliferation of languages that the city has to embrace. This research study focused on the five most common languages for Glasgow's asylum seekers. Whilst these account for the majority of the local asylum seeker population, the research showed that more work needed to be done in the provision of linguistic services around the five languages. The challenge for higher numbers of other languages that cover the minority of the asylum seekers coming to the city might well be greater. The main areas to provide interpretation support are:

- upon reception in Glasgow;
- taking asylum seekers to their accommodation and this initial familiarisation support; and
- in the organisations to which asylum seekers are signposted.

2. Temporary accommodation

The main issue with temporary accommodation related to its perceived low standard. This seems to amplify asylum seekers' frustrations about having to stay in it and having to stay longer in it than what they were originally told. Although inter-related, the three action areas regarding temporary accommodation are:

- further develop planning systems to reduce dependence on temporary accommodation;
- seek to improve the quality of temporary accommodation; and

-
- improve how issues around temporary accommodation are communicated with asylum seekers who have to stay in it.

3. Human courtesy

Human courtesy, politeness and consideration are key to how well asylum seekers feel they have been treated. Where these were present in people helping asylum seekers, they had a dramatic influence on how asylum seekers perceived they were treated. Where they were absent the converse was true. Personal vigilance in this area is the minimum requirement. There might be merit in ensuring that all working with asylum seekers understand the gravity and importance of this. This is perhaps a training and development need.

4. Time for attention

Being able to spend time with asylum seekers appeared key to how well they perceived they were looked after. This involves being able to spend sufficient time with them when they are first taken to their accommodation and being able to make follow up visits. The data showed there to be a variation in how asylum seekers felt they were treated, the implication of this being that amount of help and support varies across asylum seekers. This places the emphasis on the support workers to use their own judgement on how much support they feel is needed.

This recommendation has implications on the resourcing of support, as the consequence is likely to be a higher level of support per person.

5. Develop peer support

The use of informal information sources (fellow countrymen, friends, the community) was shown to be prominent and to a strong degree initiated by the asylum seeker. Moves to locate asylum seekers with people from their former country are helpful here. There looks to be potential for the asylum support structure to deliberately use informal information sources, such as peer educators, to help asylum seekers.

6. Welcome Pack

The Welcome Pack appeared to be well used and well thought of. Where translated, the quality of the translations appeared high but asylum seekers were keen that as much of the English terminology as possible is translated. There were improvements suggested in the research. These centred on information which might be linked to socialisation of asylum seekers rather than the issues around survival for asylum seekers. Areas for attention were:

- maps/directions (to places of worship, entertainment, shops, dentists, etc);
- information about buses; and
- information about organisations of the same nationality.

7. Learning English

By a large margin, learning English is the main training avenue sought by asylum seekers. Beyond developing a command of English that enables asylum seekers to live more effectively in local society, English language capability appeared key to preparation for employment. Although the remit of this study included the need to look beyond English language training in the context of training for employment, the data emphasises the need for this to be part of the training for employment package.

8. Training re-orientation

One view that emerged from the stakeholder interviews was that vocational training should be linked to Scottish skills gaps. Given the range of skills that asylum seekers bring, this should not be a problem for the majority. However, since most asylum seekers are keen to pursue jobs in line with their prior experience, there will be instances where a re-focusing and re-orientation around employment aspirations is a necessary step.

9. Paid work – a ‘male’ activity

The data showed that asylum seekers’ experience in and aspirations for paid work were much stronger in males than females. There might be circumstantial reasons for this, but there appeared also to be cultural ones. The gender demarcation with respect to work seemed greater with asylum seekers than it is with native Glaswegians, therefore a more augmented training path might be necessary to encourage and facilitate female asylum seekers into work than for males.

10. Being able to accommodate variety in employment aspirations

Asylum seekers arrive in Glasgow with a range of skills and qualifications. The majority who are interested in/able to pursue training for work wished to build on their existing skills and experiences and pursue that line of work. The emphasis in training requirements seemed to be around developing English language skills, along with updating/convertng training and translating existing knowledge and work practice to the local context.

11. Hand-holding through training

Whilst there seemed a high awareness in general terms that suitable training existed, the uptake by asylum seekers is low. The research emphasised the importance of being able to guide individual asylum seekers through the maze that is accessing suitable training and the training available pre-decision. This suggests personal development pathways customised to the individual asylum seeker with a more 'hand-holding' approach than trusting personal initiative to identify and follow through to the solution. This might also help reduce the perceived barrier to participation of training cost. The research data intimated the perceived (high) costs of training to be based on hearsay and casual information rather than specific/thorough research.

12. Computing

With the exception of English language training the one evident training theme mentioned by asylum seekers was for computing. This was a broad heading. For some asylum seekers it was geared to work readiness and for others it centred on a broader need to fit in with society.

13. Childcare

Childcare issues were shown to be the second highest barrier to participating in training. Only lack of English language skills was higher.

14. Cultural awareness

There seemed a strong appetite for asylum seekers learning more about local (Glasgow and Scottish) culture. This is to help acquaint them with local practices as part of the settlement process. This was evident by the comments regarding the augmentation of the Welcome Pack, and the interviews and focus group discussions regarding training needs. Some suggested that this could be a subject for a series of classes. Others felt that printed information could help in this regard. Overall, there appeared a need for greater information input into the socialisation of asylum seekers into their new communities.

These fourteen areas of recommendation conclude this research study. Practical actions for most are readily identifiable and can be evaluated for their feasibility. One further theme that emerged was the willingness of members of the asylum seeker communities to be involved in the development of ideas and initiatives aimed at helping asylum seekers. Support agencies and organisations are encouraged to embrace this willingness in their work to further develop services.

Appendices

Appendix 1 Questionnaire

Appendix 2 Demographic tables

Appendix 3 Occupation in former country

Appendix 4 Interest in training

Appendix 1 – Questionnaire

Contract No: 2186
Contract Name: Asylum Seekers

COLLECT RESPONDENT DETAILS:

Nationality	
Post-code	
Area (neighbourhood) they live	
All languages spoken	
First language	
Age	
Gender	
Numbers/age/relationship of family members living with you	
Are you the head of the household/principal case?	
Occupation in former country	
Length of time in Scotland	

CLOSE INTERVIEW BY READING OUT STATEMENT:

"Thank you very much for your help. Can I assure you once again that the information you have given will be treated as absolutely confidential and will only be used for the purposes of genuine market research."

Interviewer Name	
Signature	
Date	

Q4. Was there anything that was particularly poor about the way you were looked after when you first arrived in Glasgow? Yes / No

Q5. (If yes) What was it that was particularly poor?

Q6. Did you have any other problems when you arrived in Glasgow? (probe on the issues, how they accessed information to help with that issue and the service they did or did not receive – for example, dentists, doctors, schools...)

Q7. What extra information or help do you think should be given to Asylum Seekers when they first arrive in Glasgow?

Q8. Where do you currently go for information or advice?(list all of them, and indicate the main one)

Q9. How useful is this?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
not at all useful
very useful

where 1 is not at all useful and 7 is very useful (and probe for comments)

Comments:

Q10 How would you prefer to receive information and advice?

- face to face
- in writing
- by telephone
- from a web site
- other (please say what) _____

Q11 Did you have a Welcome Pack? Yes / No / Don't know
(If no or don't know, go to Q19, starting "This is the Welcome Pack.....")

Q12. (If yes) What did you find most useful about the pack?

Q13. How often did you use it? (probe whether they read it fully on arrival, or referred to it when needed)

Q14. How long did you use it for, do you still use it?

Q15. Is there anything in it that is not useful?

Q16. How easy did you find the Welcome Pack to use? (probe layout, language used, ease of finding specific information)

Q17 There is quite a bit of information in the Welcome Pack. Do you think there is any information missing? Yes / No

Q18 What extra information should be included in the Welcome Pack?

GO TO Q22

This is the Welcome Pack that is given to Asylum Seekers when they first arrive in the city and are accommodated in Glasgow City Council houses.

Show the Asylum Seeker the Welcome Pack and allow them a few minutes to look at it.

Q19 Do you think this pack would have been useful? (probe what they like about it and what did they dislike)

Q20 There is quite a bit of information in the Welcome Pack. What do you think is the most useful information.

Q21 What extra information should be included in the Welcome Pack?

Future plans

Q22 Do you plan to stay in Glasgow after you receive your decision? Yes / No

Q23 Did you do paid work in your home country? Yes / No
(if yes, what type?)

Q24 Would you like to do the same kind of work here? (probe the answer)

Q25 What training or qualifications do you have from your home country?

Q26 Are you working? Yes / No
(please say what as)

Q27 Have you done/are you doing any training since arriving in Glasgow? Yes / No
(if yes, probe what have they studied **and** where)

Q28 What (additional) training do you need or want now?

Q.29 Why would you like this training?

Q30 Do you know whether this training is available in Glasgow?

Q31 Have you applied for this training? Yes / No
(probe the outcome)

Q32 Are there any barriers that could stop you accessing this training? (probe cost, location, transport, childcare etc **and** why it is a problem.)

Q33 Any other comments about either the arrival process or possible training and employment?

Thankyou

Appendix 2 – Demographic tables

Nationality

	Total		Age 2										Gender				Family Status			Length of time										
	No	%	16-24		25-34		35-44		45+		refused		Male		Female		Head, single		Head with family		Not head, with family		0-3 months		4-6 months		7-9 months		10-12 months	
			No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Iraqi	28	22%	7	32%	12	18%	9	29%	0	0%	0	0%	4	6%	24	38%	1	3%	5	10%	22	49%	0	0%	7	23%	15	38%	6	13%
Kurdish	13	10%	1	5%	10	15%	2	6%	0	0%	0	0%	12	19%	1	2%	7	22%	5	10%	1	2%	1	11%	1	3%	6	15%	5	11%
Albanian	24	19%	9	41%	13	20%	1	3%	1	17%	0	0%	12	19%	12	19%	8	25%	5	10%	11	24%	0	0%	4	13%	5	13%	15	32%
Arabian	15	12%	1	5%	8	12%	6	19%	0	0%	0	0%	10	16%	5	8%	3	9%	7	14%	5	11%	1	11%	4	13%	3	8%	7	15%
Somali	26	21%	3	14%	12	18%	5	16%	4	67%	2	100%	13	21%	13	21%	6	19%	20	41%	0	0%	6	67%	8	27%	8	20%	4	9%
Iranian	20	16%	1	5%	10	15%	8	26%	1	17%	0	0%	12	19%	8	13%	7	22%	7	14%	6	13%	1	11%	6	20%	3	8%	10	21%
Total	126	100%	22	100%	65	100%	31	100%	6	100%	2	100%	63	100%	63	100%	32	100%	49	100%	45	100%	9	100%	30	100%	40	100%	47	100%

Age

	Total		Nationality										Gender				Family Status			Length of time												
	No	%	Iraqi		Kurdish		Albanian		Arabian		Somali		Iranian		Male		Female		Head, single		Head with family		Not head, with family		0-3 months		4-6 months		7-9 months		10-12 months	
			No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%		
16-24	22	17%	7	25%	1	8%	9	34%	1	7%	3	12%	1	5%	8	13%	14	22%	7	22%	2	4%	13	29%	3	33%	3	10%	6	15%	10	21%
25-34	65	52%	12	43%	10	77%	13	54%	8	53%	12	46%	10	50%	33	52%	32	51%	21	66%	22	45%	22	49%	5	56%	17	57%	16	40%	27	57%
35-44	31	25%	9	32%	2	15%	1	4%	6	40%	5	19%	8	40%	17	27%	14	22%	4	13%	17	35%	10	22%	1	11%	8	27%	16	40%	6	13%
45+	6	5%	0	0%	0	0%	1	4%	0	0%	4	15%	1	5%	5	8%	1	2%	0	0%	6	12%	0	0%	0	0%	1	3%	1	3%	4	9%
refused	2	2%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	2	8%	0	0%	0	0%	2	3%	0	0%	2	4%	0	0%	0	0%	1	3%	1	3%	0	0%
Total	126	100%	28	100%	13	100%	24	100%	15	100%	26	100%	20	100%	63	100%	63	100%	32	100%	49	100%	45	100%	9	100%	30	100%	40	100%	47	100%

Gender

	Total		Nationality										Age 2					Family Status			Length of time																	
	No	%	Iraqi		Kurdish		Albanian		Arabian		Somali		Iranian		16-24	25-34	35-44	45+	refused	Head, single		Head with family		Not head, with family		0-3 months		4-6 months		7-9 months		10-12 months						
			No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%						
Male	83	50%	4	14%	12	92%	12	50%	10	67%	13	50%	12	60%	8	36%	33	51%	17	55%	5	83%	0	0%	31	97%	31	63%	1	2%	6	67%	10	33%	20	50%	27	57%
Female	83	50%	24	86%	1	8%	12	50%	5	33%	13	50%	8	40%	14	64%	32	49%	14	45%	1	17%	2	100%	1	3%	18	37%	44	98%	3	33%	20	67%	20	50%	20	43%
Total	126	100%	28	100%	13	100%	24	100%	15	100%	26	100%	20	100%	22	100%	65	100%	31	100%	6	100%	2	100%	32	100%	49	100%	45	100%	9	100%	30	100%	40	100%	47	100%

Family Status

	Total		Nationality										Age 2					Gender		Length of time																
	No.	%	Iraqi		Kurdish		Albanian		Arabian		Somali		Iranian		16-24		25-34		35-44		45+		refused		Male		Female		0-3 months		4-6 months		7-9 months		10-12 months	
			No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Head, single	32	25%	1	4%	7	54%	8	33%	3	20%	6	23%	7	35%	7	32%	21	32%	4	13%	0	0%	0	0%	31	49%	1	2%	2	22%	4	13%	9	23%	17	36%
Head with family	49	39%	5	18%	5	38%	5	21%	7	47%	20	77%	7	35%	2	9%	22	34%	17	55%	6	100%	2	100%	31	49%	18	29%	7	78%	14	47%	16	40%	12	26%
Not head, with family	45	36%	22	79%	1	8%	11	46%	5	33%	0	0%	6	30%	13	59%	22	34%	10	32%	0	0%	0	0%	1	2%	44	70%	0	0%	12	40%	15	38%	18	38%
Total	126	100%	28	100%	13	100%	24	100%	15	100%	26	100%	20	100%	22	100%	65	100%	31	100%	6	100%	2	100%	63	100%	63	100%	9	100%	30	100%	40	100%	47	100%

Length of time in UK

	Total		Nationality										Age 2					Gender		Family Status														
	No.	%	Iraqi		Kurdish		Albanian		Arabian		Somali		Iranian		16-24		25-34		35-44		45+		refused		Male		Female		Head, single		Head with family		Not head, with family	
			No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
0-3 months	9	7%	0	0%	1	8%	0	0%	1	7%	6	23%	1	5%	14%	5	8%	1	3%	0	0%	0	0%	6	10%	3	5%	2	6%	7	14%	0	0%	
4-6 months	30	24%	7	25%	1	8%	4	17%	4	27%	8	31%	6	30%	14%	17	26%	8	26%	1	17%	1	50%	10	16%	20	32%	4	13%	14	29%	12	27%	
7-9 months	40	32%	15	54%	6	46%	5	21%	3	20%	8	31%	3	15%	27%	16	25%	16	52%	1	17%	1	50%	20	32%	20	32%	9	28%	16	33%	15	33%	
10-12 months	47	37%	6	21%	5	38%	15	63%	7	47%	4	15%	10	50%	45%	27	42%	6	19%	4	67%	0	0%	27	43%	20	32%	17	53%	12	24%	18	40%	
Total	126	100%	28	100%	13	100%	24	100%	15	100%	26	100%	20	100%	100%	65	100%	31	100%	6	100%	2	100%	63	100%	63	100%	32	100%	49	100%	45	100%	

Postcode of residence

	Total		Nationality										Age 2					Gender		Family Status			Length of time											
	No.	%	Iraqi		Kurdish		Albanian		Arabian		Somali		Iranian		16-24		25-34		35-44		45+		refused		Male		Female		Head, single		Head with family		Not head, with family	
			No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
G13	2	2%	1	4%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	5%	1	5%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	2	3%	0	0%	1	2%	1	2%	0	0%
G14	18	14%	7	26%	2	15%	3	13%	1	7%	0	0%	5	25%	2	9%	12	18%	4	13%	0	0%	0	0%	7	11%	11	17%	4	13%	3	6%	11	24%
G15	2	2%	0	0%	1	8%	0	0%	1	7%	0	0%	0	0%	1	5%	1	2%	0	0%	0	0%	2	3%	0	0%	2	6%	0	0%	0	0%	1	3%
G20	6	5%	0	0%	1	8%	0	0%	2	13%	0	0%	3	15%	2	9%	4	6%	0	0%	0	0%	4	6%	2	3%	3	9%	1	2%	2	4%	0	0%
G21	45	36%	9	32%	4	31%	12	50%	5	33%	12	46%	3	15%	7	32%	27	42%	8	26%	2	33%	1	50%	22	35%	23	37%	12	38%	18	37%	15	33%
G31	1	1%	0	0%	1	8%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	2%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	2%	0	0%	1	3%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
G42	8	6%	5	18%	0	0%	0	0%	2	8%	1	5%	2	9%	1	2%	5	16%	0	0%	0	0%	2	3%	6	10%	0	0%	2	4%	6	13%	1	11%
G43	18	14%	2	7%	0	0%	1	7%	10	38%	5	25%	2	9%	7	11%	7	23%	2	33%	0	0%	7	11%	11	17%	4	13%	10	20%	4	9%	2	22%
G45	6	5%	0	0%	0	0%	6	25%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	2	9%	4	6%	0	0%	0	0%	2	3%	4	6%	2	6%	1	2%	3	7%	0	0%
G46	3	2%	0	0%	1	8%	1	4%	0	0%	0	0%	1	5%	1	5%	1	2%	1	3%	0	0%	3	5%	0	0%	1	3%	2	4%	0	0%	1	11%
G5	10	8%	3	11%	3	23%	2	8%	0	0%	2	8%	0	0%	2	9%	3	5%	3	10%	1	17%	1	50%	6	10%	4	6%	3	9%	4	8%	3	7%
G51	4	3%	1	4%	0	0%	0	0%	3	20%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	2	3%	2	6%	0	0%	0	0%	4	6%	0	0%	1	11%	0	0%	2	5%
G52	3	2%	0	0%	0	0%	2	13%	0	0%	0	0%	1	5%	0	0%	1	2%	1	3%	1	17%	0	0%	3	5%	0	0%	0	0%	2	7%	0	0%
Total	126	100%	28	100%	13	100%	24	100%	15	100%	26	100%	20	100%	22	100%	65	100%	31	100%	6	100%	2	100%	63	100%	63	100%	32	100%	49	100%	45	100%

Who owns your home?

	Total		Nationality										Age 2					Gender		Family Status			Length of time											
	No.	%	Iraqi		Kurdish		Albanian		Arabian		Somali		Iranian		16-24		25-34		35-44		45+		refused		Male		Female		Head, single		Head with family		Not head, with family	
			No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
Council	91	72%	28	100%	11	85%	0	0%	12	80%	24	92%	16	80%	13	59%	44	68%	27	87%	5	83%	2	100%	45	71%	46	73%	21	66%	39	80%	31	69%
NASS	2	2%	0	0%	0	0%	1	4%	0	0%	0	0%	1	5%	0	0%	1	2%	1	3%	0	0%	2	3%	0	0%	1	3%	1	2%	0	0%	0	0%
No response	32	25%	0	0%	2	15%	23	96%	2	13%	2	8%	3	15%	24	41%	19	29%	3	10%	1	17%	0	0%	15	24%	17	27%	9	28%	9	18%	14	31%
hotel	1	1%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	7%	0	0%	0	0%	1	2%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	2%	0	0%	1	3%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Total	126	100%	28	100%	13	100%	24	100%	15	100%	26	100%	20	100%	22	100%	65	100%	31	100%	6	100%	2	100%	63	100%	63	100%	32	100%	49	100%	45	100%

First language

	Total		Nationality										Age 2					Gender		Family Status			Length of time																			
	No.	%	Iraqi		Kurdish		Albanian		Arabian		Somali		Iranian		16-24		25-34		35-44		45+		refused		Male		Female		Head, single		Head with family		Not head, with family		0-3 months		4-6 months		7-9 months		10-12 months	
			No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
Albanian	24	19%	0	0%	0	0%	24	100%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	9	41%	13	20%	1	3%	1	17%	0	0%	12	19%	12	19%	8	25%	5	10%	11	24%	0	0%	4	13%	5	13%	15	32%
Arabic	26	21%	11	39%	0	0%	0	0%	15	100%	0	0%	0	0%	3	14%	12	18%	11	35%	0	0%	0	0%	14	22%	12	19%	4	13%	9	18%	13	29%	1	11%	7	23%	7	18%	11	23%
Farsi	26	21%	6	21%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	20	100%	3	14%	13	20%	9	29%	1	17%	0	0%	12	19%	14	22%	7	22%	9	18%	10	22%	1	11%	7	23%	8	20%	10	21%
Kurdish	24	19%	11	39%	13	100%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4	18%	15	23%	5	16%	0	0%	0	0%	12	19%	12	19%	7	22%	6	12%	11	24%	1	11%	4	13%	12	30%	7	15%
Somali	26	21%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	26	100%	0	0%	3	14%	12	18%	5	16%	4	67%	2	100%	13	21%	13	21%	6	19%	20	41%	0	0%	6	67%	8	27%	8	20%	4	9%
Total	126	100%	28	100%	13	100%	24	100%	15	100%	26	100%	20	100%	22	100%	65	100%	31	100%	6	100%	2	100%	63	100%	63	100%	32	100%	49	100%	45	100%	9	100%	30	100%	40	100%	47	100%

Other languages spoken

	Total		Nationality										Age 2					Gender		Family Status			Length of time																			
	No.	%	Iraqi		Kurdish		Albanian		Arabian		Somali		Iranian		16-24		25-34		35-44		45+		refused		Male		Female		Head, single		Head with family		Not head, with family		0-3 months		4-6 months		7-9 months		10-12 months	
			No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%				
Arabic	15	12%	5	18%	10	77%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	5%	12	18%	2	6%	0	0%	0	0%	9	14%	6	10%	5	16%	5	10%	5	11%	1	11%	3	10%	7	18%	4	9%
English	26	21%	8	29%	2	15%	0	0%	3	20%	0	0%	13	65%	4	18%	13	20%	8	26%	1	17%	0	0%	13	21%	13	21%	7	22%	9	18%	10	22%	0	0%	6	20%	8	20%	12	26%
Farsi	2	2%	2	7%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	2%	1	3%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	2	3%	0	0%	1	2%	1	2%	0	0%	0	0%	1	3%	1	2%
French	4	3%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4	27%	0	0%	0	0%	2	3%	2	6%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4	6%	0	0%	1	3%	3	6%	0	0%	1	11%	1	3%	0	0%	2	4%
Kurdish	4	3%	4	14%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	5%	1	2%	2	6%	0	0%	0	0%	2	3%	2	3%	1	3%	0	0%	3	7%	0	0%	1	3%	3	8%	0	0%
Turkish	4	3%	2	7%	1	8%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	5%	0	0%	2	3%	2	6%	0	0%	0	0%	1	2%	3	5%	0	0%	1	2%	3	7%	1	11%	2	7%	1	3%	0	0%
None	79	63%	11	39%	3	23%	24	100%	9	60%	26	100%	6	30%	16	73%	40	62%	16	52%	5	83%	2	100%	37	59%	42	67%	19	59%	33	67%	27	60%	7	78%	19	63%	22	55%	31	66%
Total	126	100%	28	100%	13	100%	24	100%	15	100%	26	100%	20	100%	22	100%	65	100%	31	100%	6	100%	2	100%	63	100%	63	100%	32	100%	49	100%	45	100%	9	100%	30	100%	40	100%	47	100%

Appendix 3 - Occupation in former country

- Housewife (38)
- Student (17)
- Unemployed (12)
- Teacher (6)
- Driver (5)
- Labourer (5)
- Hairdresser (3)
- Self-employed (3)
- Secretary (2)
- Nurse (2)
- Waiter (2)
- Sport (2)
- Cook (2)
- Carpenter (2)
- Shepherd (2)
- Shopkeeper (2)
- Accountant
- Agricultural engineer
- Builder
- Civil engineer
- Employee in tool office
- Employee of NIOC
- Factory worker
- Farmer
- General language
- Government employee
- In a telecommunications centre
- Joiner
- Journalist
- Mechanic
- Officer
- PR officer
- Production and distribution
- Selling carpets
- Shop assistant
- Tour operator manager
- Welder

Appendix 4 – Interest in training

- English (52)
- IT/computing (32)
- Hairdressing (10)
- Sewing (8)
- Driving (10)
- Further (higher) education (5)
- Sport (4)
- Nursing (2)
- Teaching (2)
- Academic to improve my speciality in law and politics up to the standard that enable me to study for MSc or PhD
- Accountancy degree
- Business administration
- Car mechanics
- Carpenter
- Chemistry, Biology
- Child care course
- Clothes design
- Cookery
- Economics
- Higher education in business
- Hospitality course
- I need some training or information about culture and regulations of this country
- Lab training
- Mechanic engineering to get certificate that help me to work here
- Mechanics of cars or vehicles
- More courses on information about regulation, safety and mechanics
- Physiotherapy
- Public relation studies
- Social culture of Glasgow
- Social work
- Tailor
- Training in a hotel
- Training in computers in regards to graphics and design, and ink for prints on socks
- Training in my own specialisation
- Training in sales in the system of this country, presentation skills etc and training in marketing
- Training to become more aware of the welding system of this country
- Welding, as well as joinery