Vietnamese refugees since 1982
Vietnamese Refugees since 1982

by Karen Duke and Tony Marshall

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Foreword

This report shows how Vietnamese refugees who entered this country since 1982 have fared. They came after the first wave of over 10,000, who arrived between 1975 and 1982 and were the subject of an earlier Research and Planning Unit survey (Jones, 1982). Many of the subjects of the present study came to join relatives who were part of the first quota (family reunion cases). There were also a few boat rescue and other special cases. From 1989 to 1992 there were further arrivals as part of another internationally agreed quota of 2,000 (the "2000 programme").

The lives of these refugees are compared with those of people of other nationalities who did not form part of a special programme, but sought asylum on an individual basis after arriving in this country. They were described in a recently published companion report to this one, The Settlement of Refugees in Britain, Home Office Research Study No. 141.

The report also shows how experiences have differed between those who spent time in camps in Hong Kong and those who did not, an important feature which affected successful settlement. Other important factors were understanding of English, previous qualifications, age on arrival, and whether or not the refugees went to reception centres in this country. This research will inform resettlement policy in the future, but even more importantly it will directly assist statutory and community agencies to develop successful strategies for helping those refugees who are already here.

ROGER TARLING
Head of the Research and Planning Unit

March 1995
Acknowledgements

Thanks are due above all to the Vietnamese refugees who agreed to be interviewed for the project. We appreciate their time and openness in answering detailed questions about their settlement experiences in the UK.

We are grateful to the following individuals who provided valuable advice and helped to gain access to the refugees: Maggie Cade at the Ockenden Venture; and Hildigard Dumper, Vienh Quec Ngo, Anh Tu Nguyen, Minh Van Bui, Luan Anh Nguyen and Phillip Williams at Refugee Action. Thanks also to all the native language interviewers who worked on the project: Minh Van Nguyen, Ai Lien Ly, Thi Thu Cuong, Minh Van Bui, Lan Kim Bui, Duy Minh Hoang, Long Thi Le, Kim Huynh, Luan Minh Ngo and Luan Anh Nguyen. We are grateful to Margaret Kemp at the Family Reunion Co-ordination Office for allowing access to the Vietnamese database for sampling purposes. We would also like to thank Jenny Carey-Wood for her advice and help throughout the project.

KAREN DUKE
TONY MARSHALL
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Summary

There have been three phases of arrival in Britain of Vietnamese refugees. The bulk came as part of a first wave between 1975 and 1982. During 1983-1988 there was a steady trickle of a few hundred Vietnamese arrivals per year, who came as boat rescue and family reunion cases, or as part of the Orderly Departure Programme (ODP). There were no systematic reception arrangements for these 'intermediate' refugees as there were for the first wave. This second wave has continued arriving, at a reduced rate, until the present, but since 1989 they have been supplemented by a special programme of 2,000 admissions (the "2000" quota). Most of these arrivals came via camps in Hong Kong, and they included some admissions on "self-sufficiency" and humanitarian grounds, although the bulk up to the end of 1992, the period covered by this research, were family reunion cases, joining relatives already settled in the UK.

The first wave (1975-1982) was the subject of a previous Home Office study (Jones, 1982). The current study describes the two later phases between 1983 and 1992. These refugees had different characteristics and resettlement experiences from earlier arrivals. Research was commissioned by the Government to examine how well they had established themselves in terms of housing, employment, education, training, health and contact with agencies and the community. The research was also expected to identify the chief influences on the success of settlement, and to compare Vietnamese refugees with other nationalities granted asylum. This information would help guide resettlement policy for future refugees and assist community and statutory agencies in their dealings with the Vietnamese.

The research consisted of two exercises. The first involved the analysis of all Vietnamese arrivals between 1983 and 1992, on the basis of a database compiled by the Family Reunion Co-ordination Office in Woking, Surrey. The second exercise involved 185 face-to-face interviews with Vietnamese refugees. The database provided a complete list of refugees as a sampling base for this survey. The interviews took place in four areas: Manchester, Birmingham, London and neighbouring counties, and Hampshire.
Backgrounds of the refugees interviewed
Fifty-seven per cent of the refugees interviewed were men and 43 per cent were women. They were fairly young, with 61 per cent under the age of 40. The majority were married and living with relatives. Only 6 per cent were living entirely on their own. Eight per cent of the households consisted of a single parent with children.

The majority had lived in urban areas in Vietnam, but generally came from poor educational backgrounds. Half had no educational or occupational qualifications. Some had had their education interrupted because of their flight from Vietnam and others had been prohibited for political reasons. Just over half had been employed in Vietnam. Almost half of these had been in unskilled jobs. Half of the sample had been in camps in Hong Kong and most of these had spent at least one year there.

Reception
Two-thirds of the sample were family reunion cases. The remaining third came to the UK for a variety of other reasons. For example, some refugees had no choice in the matter because they were rescued at sea by British vessels, others were accepted into the UK on self-sufficiency or humanitarian grounds, some were sponsored by British voluntary groups and others had applied for resettlement to the UK of their own accord.

Half of the respondents went to reception centres. Those without family or community support on arrival were more likely to do so than those who already had support. The majority of them stayed in reception centres for six months or less, and most felt this was adequate to prepare them for daily life in Britain.

Language
The majority of the sample could not speak any English on arrival in the UK. Most had since taken at least one English class, but the majority only completed a single course at beginner’s level. The majority were therefore still coping with limited levels of English. Many were still encountering difficulties in the most routine tasks, such as going shopping and filling in forms.

Employment
There was a high rate of unemployment among the respondents interviewed. The one-fifth who had work were mainly in unskilled or manual jobs. The majority (70 per cent) had never had paid employment in the UK.

Most of the unemployed were not actively applying for jobs at the time of the interview. Many felt discouraged by the current job market and the competition for all types of work. The fact that many had not had employment or educational experience in Vietnam, together with their limited English, put them at a great disadvantage.
SUMMARY

Financial situation
Only one-quarter of all households contained a wage-earner, and a further 3 per cent had their own business. Therefore the majority of households were dependent on benefits. Most respondents nevertheless said they had enough money to cover essential expenses.

Education and training
Only 22 per cent of the respondents had taken, or were presently taking, educational or vocational courses in the UK. Those taking courses were most likely to be young, to have previous qualifications from Vietnam, to have been in the UK for at least five years and to have first taken English lessons. The majority of the sample (73 per cent) said they would like to study or train further in the UK (mostly English language courses).

The only job search schemes used with any frequency by respondents were Job Clubs and Restart, while the training scheme used most frequently was Employment Training. The majority thought them helpful in finding jobs. Those who had been on a scheme were more likely to have a job than those who had not.

Housing
Vietnamese refugees were much less likely to be owner-occupiers than the rest of the population. Ninety per cent were renting their current accommodation from the public sector, half from the Local Authority and half from a Housing Association.

Almost half had temporarily moved in with family and friends when they first arrived. This often resulted in overcrowded and inadequate accommodation. However, only 10 per cent were still sharing with another household.

Although there are more Vietnamese living in London than in other parts of the country, this is mainly the result of early patterns of settlement, with later arrivals joining relatives already living there. When there were no such ties, there was no apparent preference for living in London. Indeed, those living elsewhere were usually more settled than those in the south-east.

Settlement in the community
In general, the refugees had very little contact with the British population. Only six per cent had joined, or taken part in, associations or groups organised by British people, and only half said they had become acquainted with any British people since they had been resettled. Those with better English skills had closer relations with the British community.
Almost two-thirds said they felt part of a community, and the majority felt safe and secure in Britain. However, half said they thought people in Britain treated them differently, one-fifth had been subjected to verbal abuse and a similar number to threats, and two respondents reported physical harassment.

Over two-thirds of the respondents considered themselves permanently settled in Britain, but a substantial minority expressed hopes of returning to Vietnam one day.

Effects on settlement
Refugees who had spent time in the camps in Hong Kong, especially if they had stayed there for three years or more, were particularly disadvantaged. Hardly any of them had ever obtained employment in Britain.

The elderly were also less likely to adjust to life in Britain, but as most had come to join younger relatives living here they were probably under less pressure to do so, being able to rely upon their families for support.

Good English and more educational experience were important for getting jobs and becoming accustomed to the British way of life. Many of the refugees, particularly the younger ones, made efforts to learn English and to study, so that, in time, employment prospects improved. It was found, however, that a person was likely to have been in the country for at least five years before there was a significant change in prospects.

Comparison with other refugees
The Vietnamese were less well-off in terms of educational and professional experience than other groups granted refugee status or given exceptional leave to remain in the UK. The latter tended to be even younger and more often living here without their families. With their better backgrounds, other refugees were more successful in the job market, but they still encountered considerable difficulties of the same kind as the Vietnamese, especially the need to improve their English and to obtain British qualifications.

Reception arrangements for the Vietnamese seem to have worked in providing more suitable housing than other groups had been able to obtain through their own resources. As a result, although fewer Vietnamese were working, they were usually living more comfortably. They were also more likely to feel permanently settled. Even so, the Vietnamese were generally less involved with British communities and associations, a feature that no doubt reflects their poorer language skills.
1 Introduction

After the fall of Saigon and the withdrawal of American troops in 1975, the exodus of refugees from Vietnam began. The initial exodus was of ethnic Vietnamese from South Vietnam who faced persecution due to their involvement in the former communist regime. Very few of them came to the UK, most settling in France and the United States. In 1975, the United States accepted 130,000 Vietnamese refugees over a two-week period and France accepted 9,500. The UK accepted 32 refugees and allowed 300 Vietnamese who were already in the country to remain.

In January 1979 the UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) and the Governor of Hong Kong appealed to other countries to accept quotas of refugees for resettlement. Britain agreed to accept 1,500 refugees from the camps in Hong Kong, Thailand and Malaysia. During this year, an additional 1,400 Vietnamese refugees were rescued at sea by British vessels.

By the summer of 1979, the refugee situation in South East Asia had changed dramatically. China invaded North Vietnam in the early spring of 1979, leading to harassment of residents of Chinese origin. As a result, increasing numbers of ethnic Chinese began to flee the country. Eventually the countries bordering the South China Sea could no longer cope with the number of refugees. An international conference in Geneva was called in July 1979 and Britain agreed to accept an additional quota of 10,000 Vietnamese refugees from Hong Kong. The majority of these refugees had arrived by 1981, but family reunion cases and other special admissions were still arriving in the UK throughout the 1980s. The UK government has continued to accept Vietnamese refugees under international and special domestic arrangements. For example, in 1989, the UK agreed to take an additional 2,000 refugees from the camps in Hong Kong. This group was still continuing to arrive in 1993.

This report features Vietnamese arrivals in the UK from 1983 to 1992. Previous research had focused on the earlier Vietnamese arrivals only (Jones, 1982; Somerset, 1983; Edholm, Roberts and Sayer, 1983; Robinson, 1985, 1989, 1993; McFarland and Walsh, 1988; Dulghish, 1989; Robinson and Hale, 1989; Hale, 1993).

Later arrivals had different characteristics and resettlement experiences from those who came before. Many were family reunion cases, joining relatives already settled in the UK. They were also more likely to have spent a period of time in the camps in Hong Kong, which may have had an impact on how well they adjusted to their new lives in this country. These camps were introduced in 1982 as a policy of "human deterrence" to discourage other Vietnamese from going to Hong Kong. Since 1988, Vietnamese arrivals there have been screened according to international rules. Those accepted as refugees are assigned to open camps, where liberty is not restricted and
they are allowed to work. Others are assigned to closed camps, where they are subjected to discipline and not allowed to work. (Home Affairs Select Committee, 1985; Diller, 1988.) Del Mundo (1993) reports that the rate of arrival for Vietnamese entering Hong Kong has decreased substantially in recent years. More than 36,000 asylum-seekers have returned to Vietnam under the UNHCR's voluntary repatriation programme, and this rate of return has steadily increased.

Almost all Vietnamese refugees arriving in the UK during the first phase (1975-1982) were initially housed in government funded reception centres run by voluntary agencies (namely British Council for Aid for Refugees, Save the Children Fund and the Ockenden Venture). These reception centres were largely phased out after the bulk of the 10,000 quota had arrived, but some were re-opened when the 2,000 quota was accepted in 1989.

Refugees who came between 1983 and 1988 were not part of any organised 'quota'. They comprised boat rescue cases, members of the Orderly Departure Programme (ODP), who were mostly family reunion, and other family reunion cases. The ODP was the result of an agreement between the UNHCR and Vietnam to facilitate select emigration and reduce departure by boat. Because this period falls between the two main quota programmes, this group of entrants will be referred to as "intermediate arrivals".

All the above types of arrival continued after 1988, boat rescue cases arriving until 1990, the ODP continuing at only a slightly reduced rate, but other family reunion cases occurring in much smaller numbers. In 1989, however, the first members of the 2,000 Programme began arriving, and this quota formed nearly 40 percent of all arrivals from 1989 to 1992. Under the arrangements for the 2000 Programme, most refugees are expected to stay in reception centres, although some with relatives already living in the UK went directly to live with them. Reception centres offer certain advantages in relation to later resettlement. Many services are available, such as English language courses, medical help, an opportunity to learn systematically about life in the UK, advice on the practicalities of living in the UK, arrangement of subsequent accommodation, enrolment of children in local schools and childcare. If refugees go to live directly with their families when they arrive in the UK, they need to make these arrangements for themselves. Few outside the 2000 Programme went through formal reception arrangements.

The Vietnamese constitute a special group of refugees accepted for asylum before arriving in this country, many coming as part of a quota under a programme specifically designed and agreed for them by the international community.

Other refugees come to the UK on an individual basis and apply for asylum. Eventual acceptance as refugees depends on whether they fit the criteria of the 1951 United Nations Convention:

*Any person who owing to well founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is*
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unable, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence, is unable, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it.

Some asylum applicants who do not so qualify are nevertheless granted "exceptional leave to remain" on humanitarian grounds. (For a comparative study of refugees other than Vietnamese, see Carey-Wood, Duke, Karn and Marshall, 1994.)

The most striking difference between quota refugees and other asylum-seekers is the type of assistance they receive. The latter are aided mainly by specialist organisations such as the Refugee Arrivals Project (RAP) at Heathrow and Gatwick airports, the Refugee Councils and refugee community groups. There are no systematic arrangements for reception and so on.

Aims of the research
A previous Home Office study of Vietnamese refugees concentrated on early arrivals during 1975 to 1982 (Jones, 1982). The Government commissioned the present research to examine how well more recent arrivals had resettled in the UK in terms of their housing, employment, education, training, health and contact with agencies and the community. The study was also intended to identify the chief influences on the success of settlement, and to compare the Vietnamese refugees with other nationalities granted asylum, studied earlier (Carey-Wood, Duke, Karn and Marshall 1994). This information would guide future policy on refugee resettlement and directly assist statutory and community agencies in developing practical strategies for helping Vietnamese refugees.

Terminology
For the purposes of this study, 'Vietnamese refugee' was taken to mean any person of Vietnamese, Chinese or Lao nationalities who fled Vietnam and was accepted into the UK as a member of the 2,000 quota, part of the Orderly Departure Programme, boat rescue, or a family reunion case.

Methodology
The research consisted of two exercises. The first involved analysis of the Family Reunion Co-ordination database, including all Vietnamese arrivals between 1983 and 1992 (see Chapter 2). The database covered the basic demographic characteristics of the entire group of Vietnamese refugees who arrived during this period.

The second exercise involved face-to-face interviews with 185 Vietnamese refugees who arrived in Britain between 1983 and 1992, representing over two percent of all those who arrived during that period. The questionnaire was based on that devised for the Home Office survey of non-quota refugees (Carey-Wood, Duke, Karn, and Marshall, 1994). It covered all aspects of the resettlement experience, including reception, housing, English language classes, education and
VIETNAMESE REFUGEES SINCE 1982

training, employment, health, contact with agencies, ties with the community and basic demographic information. Similar questions were asked in both surveys so that comparisons could be drawn between the Vietnamese and non-quota refugees. When comparisons are made in the text between these two groups, the findings in relation to the non-quota refugees are from Carey-Wood, Duke, Karan and Marshall (1994). These included people with refugee status and asylum-seekers who have not been recognised as refugees but have been granted exceptional leave to remain (ELR).

The fieldwork occurred over the period August to October 1993. Interviews were carried out by Karen Duke and ten Vietnamese refugees, selected for their bilingual skills and specially trained. Interviews took place in four areas: Manchester, Birmingham, the South-East (including London) and Hampshire. Manchester, Birmingham and London were chosen because these areas are known to have large, established Vietnamese communities. Hampshire represented a more recent area of settlement.

The Family Reunion Co-ordination database was used as the sampling frame for this survey. The database was stratified by geographical area and separate random samples were taken for each, aiming to obtain 100 interviews in London and the South-East, 50 in Birmingham, 50 in Manchester and 20 in Hampshire. There were several problems in using the Family Reunion Co-ordination records. Many addresses were missing or out of date. The co-operation of Vietnamese refugee organisations in each area was therefore invaluable. In many cases, they were able to trace the households that had been selected for interview from their own records and personal knowledge.

Leaflets explaining the aims and reasons for the project were translated into Vietnamese and Chinese and sent to the selected individuals. These leaflets contained a simple form for the individual to fill out, indicating whether or not they were willing to participate in the study. Interviewers followed up by telephone those who did not respond. This method of contact was successful in all areas except London, where there were greater problems with both the accuracy of addresses and the tracing of potential respondents. As a result, the target sample for the London and South-East area was not obtained in the time available (see Table 1.1).

Table 1.1
Areas from which the sample was selected

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>London and the South-East</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manchester</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hampshire</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>185</td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2 Vietnamese arrivals in the UK 1983-1992

The information in this chapter comes from the complete database of Vietnamese arrivals compiled by the Family Reunion Co-ordination Office in Woking, Surrey. The Office provides liaison between the Home Office, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Refugee Action, Save the Children Fund and the Ockenden Venture. All the individual refugee records from files dating from 1979 to the most recent arrivals have been transferred to a computerised system. Some of the records are incomplete, but they provide an adequate portrayal of the basic demographic characteristics of Vietnamese refugees. Slight differences in totals occur between the figures here and those obtained from Immigration and Nationality Department records. These are probably the result of errors in the transfer of information and incomplete records, but the differences are not significant.

A total of 7,978 individuals entered the UK during 1983 to 1992 as part of 3,102 separate arrivals. These arrivals each comprised from one to 17 persons, but just over half were made up of two or more persons (Table 2.1). Approximately two-thirds joined relatives in established households.

Table 2.1
Size of group arriving in UK

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group Size</th>
<th>Number of arrivals</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One person</td>
<td>1,577</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two persons</td>
<td>574</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three persons</td>
<td>381</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four persons</td>
<td>258</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Five persons</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Six persons</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seven or more</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>3,102</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sex
Of all the Vietnamese refugees who arrived in the UK during 1983 to 1992, 51 per cent were women and 49 per cent were men. Jones (1982) found a slight preponderance of males (53 per cent) over females (47 per cent) among the first UK arrivals. This was because men were more likely to leave Vietnam first, the rest of the family following later. Women were more likely to arrive as family reunion cases than were men.
VIETNAMESE REFUGEES SINCE 1982

Age
The majority of the refugees (80 per cent) were under the age of 40 at the time of arrival. Jones (1982) similarly found that his earlier sample was comprised mainly of young adults and children. Eighty-three per cent of his sample were under the age of 40, with almost 60 per cent aged under 25. As a result, the population is still a relatively young one with only a quarter over the age of 40. (Table 2.2)

Table 2.2
Age at arrival and at interview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age at arrival</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Age in 1993</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 years and under</td>
<td>1561</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>689</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 to 17 years</td>
<td>1513</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 to 24 years</td>
<td>1458</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1559</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 29 years</td>
<td>812</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1056</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 to 39 years</td>
<td>938</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1557</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 to 49 years</td>
<td>436</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>579</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 to 59 years</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>391</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 years and over</td>
<td>730</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1039</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>7878</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>7878</strong>*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:
* 100 missing cases (1562)

Year of entry
Table 2.3 shows that arrivals from 1983 to 1992 occurred at a fairly steady rate, with no inordinate increase occasioned by the 2,000 Programme. The 2,000 quota continued to arrive in the UK in 1993, when a further 764 individuals arrived.

Table 2.3
Year of arrival

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of individuals</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Number of arrivals</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>1280</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>521</td>
<td>17.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>840</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>333</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>547</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>848</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>315</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>480</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>803</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>342</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>907</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>327</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>797</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>297</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>667</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>809</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>7978</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>3102</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Types of entrants
Three-quarters of Vietnamese refugees arriving during 1983 to 1992 were family reunion cases. Half of them were part of the Olderly Departure Programme (see page 2). The criteria for family reunion for the earliest Vietnamese arrivals were much wider than for other refugees. Not only spouses and minor children were admitted, but also unmarried children under the age of 21, parents and unmarried brothers and sisters. Once the 10,000 quota was filled, this practice came to an end. At present, the spouse and minor dependent children are admitted, and others only if they qualify under the usual Immigration Rules or there are circumstances of an unusual and compelling compassionate nature. The same criteria apply to all people granted refugee status.

The beginning of the 2,000 Programme in 1989 only reduced the proportion of family reunion cases slightly, from 76 per cent to 70 per cent (see Table 2.4). The majority of the 2,000 quota themselves qualified as family reunion, while others continued to arrive as part of the ODP (34 per cent of those arriving 1989-92) and from other sources (although the latter only accounted for 14 per cent of arrivals, as against 37.5 per cent during 1983-88).

Table 2.4
Types of entrants to the UK by date of arrival

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of entrant</th>
<th>Arrivals 1983-88</th>
<th>Arrivals 1989-92</th>
<th>All arrivals 1983-88</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boat rescue</td>
<td>319, 16.0%</td>
<td>82, 7.0%</td>
<td>401, 12.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ODP: Family reunion</td>
<td>754, 39.0%</td>
<td>397, 34.0%</td>
<td>1151, 37.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private sponsor</td>
<td>148, 7.5%</td>
<td>70, 6.0%</td>
<td>218, 7.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000: Family reunion</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>255, 22.0%</td>
<td>255, 8.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanitarian</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>15, 1.0%</td>
<td>15, 0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-sufficiency</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>182, 16.0%</td>
<td>182, 5.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other: Family reunion</td>
<td>579, 30.0%</td>
<td>132, 11.6%</td>
<td>711, 22.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private sponsor/FR</td>
<td>148, 7.5%</td>
<td>30, 3.0%</td>
<td>178, 5.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>1948, 100%</td>
<td>1153, 100%</td>
<td>3101, 99.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:
* 1 case missing data

Many of the 2,000 quota comprised “self-sufficiency” cases (40 per cent), or individuals that were felt to have potential in the UK in terms of employment and economic independence. In most cases, these were young men, alone or with their families. The head of household had to pass criteria of literacy, employment and age. Many more self-sufficiency cases were to arrive in 1993 (163, or 78 per cent of all 2,000 Programme entrants in that year). The research was therefore carried out before this new wave of entrants made itself fully felt. They are probably different in many respects from previous arrivals.

A small number (three per cent) of the 2,000 Programme were allowed to enter the UK on humanitarian grounds. These refugees were usually unaccompanied minors, single parents or mentally ill. By the end of 1992, approximately 1,420 refugees had arrived under the 2,000 Programme.
VIETNAMESE REFUGEES SINCE 1982

Finally, some refugees to the UK had escaped Vietnam by boat after 1982, although the major era of the "boat people" was over. These people had been rescued at sea. They comprised 16 per cent of the 1983-88 arrivals, but only seven per cent thereafter. The last recorded boat rescue case (as at the end of 1993) was in 1990.

Younger refugees were more likely to be boat rescue, self-sufficiency and humanitarian cases, while refugees aged over 40 were more likely to be family reunion cases or to have private sponsors. Self-sufficiency and humanitarian cases (86 per cent) and family reunion cases (58 per cent) were most likely to arrive in the UK in a group or family, while private sponsorships (45 per cent) and boat rescues (29 per cent) were more likely to arrive singly.

Agencies assisting with reception and resettlement
Since 1979, when the first major influx of Vietnamese refugees arrived, three main agencies have dealt with their reception and resettlement arrangements: British Council for Aid to Refugees (BCAR) which has now become the Refugee Council; Save the Children Fund (SCF) which later formed a new agency called Refugee Action; and the Ockenden Venture (see Table 2.5). Jones (1982) found that 43 per cent of his 1975-1982 sample were resettled by BCAR, 43 per cent by Ockenden Venture and 14 per cent by SCF. Each agency was to resettle refugees from its reception centres in different geographical zones. BCAR was responsible for the South and South-West, Ockenden Venture for the Midlands, North-West and North Wales, and SCF for Scotland, Northern Ireland and East England.

A small number of refugees were assisted by other organisations, while others had no assistance from any agency and were helped only by private sponsors. During 1989-1992, the primary agencies assisting in reception and resettlement were Refugee Action (49 per cent) and Ockenden Venture (34 per cent).

Reception
Only 35 per cent of persons arriving from 1983 to 1992 are recorded as attending reception centres, whereas all those who arrived during 1975-1982 had done so. The creation of established communities, and relatives previously settled in the UK, lessened the need for reception centres. Family reunion cases and those who were privately sponsored were therefore less likely than others to go to reception centres. On the other hand, refugees arriving under the 2,000 Programme (even family reunion cases) mostly went to reception centres (91 per cent). (For more on the provision of reception centres see Chapter 4.)

In addition to being assisted by agencies, 89 per cent of the arrivals had a sponsor in the UK. In the majority of cases, this was a relative of the refugee already living here. Earlier arrivals were more likely to have had a sponsor (96 per cent) than later arrivals (58 per cent of the 2,000 Programme).
Table 2.5
Agency assisting in resettlement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Refugee Council</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>281</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Save the Children</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refugee Action</td>
<td>583</td>
<td>564</td>
<td>1147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ockenden Venture</td>
<td>677</td>
<td>394</td>
<td>1071</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other agencies</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private sponsor</td>
<td>237</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>339</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>1898</strong></td>
<td><strong>1147</strong></td>
<td><strong>3045</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:
* Missing data, 59 cases.
** Missing data, 7 cases.

Area of settlement
Over half the Vietnamese who entered during 1983 to 1992 settled in London or the South-East (Table 2.6). The refugees arriving in the latter part of this period were particularly likely to settle in London and the South-East (65 per cent). London was the only region to have a higher proportional influx in 1989-92 than in 1983-88 (54 per cent, relative to 38 per cent earlier).

Robinson and Hale (1989) traced the geography of Vietnamese secondary migration in the UK in 1988. Their results for areas of resettlement are not significantly different from those recorded here.

Table 2.6
Area of resettlement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>London</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Midlands</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South-East</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South-West</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Midlands</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Anglia</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wales</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Ireland</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>(1521)</strong></td>
<td><strong>(841)</strong></td>
<td><strong>(2365)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:
* 737 missing cases (24%)
VIETNAMESE REFUGEES SINCE 1982

The bulk of those in the West Midlands reside in Birmingham (11 per cent of all arrivals, and 13 per cent of those in the later period). Those in the North are mainly situated in Manchester, Leeds and Merseyside. Surrey, Essex and Hampshire hold the bulk of those in the South-East. The South-Western population is virtually confined to Bristol, and the East Midlands residents are mostly in Nottinghamshire. The Northern Ireland community is almost entirely in Craigavon, Armagh.
3 Profile of the Vietnamese refugees in the survey

The information available from the Family Reunion database is very limited. The questionnaire survey is able to provide much richer information. This will form the basis of the rest of this report. In the first instance, however, there are three pieces of information provided in the interviews that can be compared with the database. These comparisons allow us to estimate the representativeness of the interview sample.

Sex
In selecting individuals for interview an attempt was made to obtain equal numbers of men and women. In the event, men were slightly over-represented in the final sample in comparison with the national figures. Fifty-seven per cent of the refugees interviewed were men, whereas Chapter 2 shows that of all the refugees who arrived in the UK during 1983 to 1992, 49 per cent were men.

Age
Only people aged eighteen and over were interviewed, because the main focus of the research was on issues such as employment, housing and training. Because the survey was retrospective, however, early experiences were also captured. In fact, 22 per cent of the sample were under the age of 30 and in many cases entered the country under the age of eighteen.

Comparison with expected rates (Table 3.1), however, reveal that the interview sample had fewer in their twenties than expected (22 per cent instead of 42 per cent), and slightly fewer aged 60 and over.

Non-quota refugees were found to be even younger, with 87 per cent under the age of 40. (See the note on page 4 about the source of information on non-Vietnamese refugees.)

Table 3.1
Respondent's age at time of interview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Expected*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18-24</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-29</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 and over</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: * Derived from figures in Table 2.2.
VIETNAMESE REFUGEES SINCE 1982

Year of entry
Sixty-two per cent of the respondents arrived during 1983 to 1988 (very close to the expected 61 per cent). The sample was evenly distributed across all years of entry.

Marital status
The majority of respondents were married (68 per cent), six per cent were divorced or separated, five per cent widowed and 21 per cent single. Seventy-six per cent of men were married compared with 57 per cent of women. Older respondents were more likely to be married than their younger counterparts.

Only 49 per cent of non-quota refugees were married, but they were much younger on average than the Vietnamese respondents.

Household size and type
The role of the family is of paramount importance in the Vietnamese community. In Vietnam, the refugees lived in extended family units, consisting of parents, all children and their in-laws, grandparents, great-grandparents and, in some cases, uncles, aunts, cousins, grandchildren, great grandchildren and in-laws. Members of the extended family would live near each other and the grandparents, father, mother, children and grandchildren would normally live in the same house (Dalglish, 1989). The manner in which Vietnamese families have traditionally lived has implications for their geographical resettlement and housing in Britain.

Only six per cent of respondents lived on their own, 13 per cent lived with one other person, 32 per cent lived in three or four person households, 36 per cent lived in five or six person households and 13 per cent lived in households of seven or more persons. Household members were defined as people who shared food or a kitchen/living room. The greatest number of persons in a household was thirteen.

Sixty-eight per cent lived with their spouse or partner, and 72 per cent had children living with them. Sixty-four per cent had dependent children under the age of 18. The number of children in these households varied from one to seven. (Table 3.2)

Table 3.2
Number of dependent children in the households

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of dependant children</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One child</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two children</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three children</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four children</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Five children or more</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3.3 indicates that the majority of respondents were living with family members. Four per cent lived with their grandchildren, 15 per cent with their siblings and 12 per cent with their parents. Of the latter, 59 per cent lived with one parent only. Women were more likely to be single parents than men.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Household type</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single person living alone</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Couple with no children</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Couple with children</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single parent and children</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other combinations of relatives</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living with non-relatives</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>(106)</td>
<td>(79)</td>
<td>(185)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In contrast, 44 per cent of non-quota refugees lived entirely on their own with no other relatives. This difference can be explained by more liberal family reunion arrangements for the early Vietnamese arrivals, and by the fact that all the Vietnamese in this survey had been recognised as refugees under the terms of the 1951 United Nations Convention, whereas the non-quota group comprised both refugees and people who had been given exceptional leave to remain. Different family reunion provisions apply to this last group.

**Home country background**

The first exodus from Vietnam in 1975 consisted mainly of ethnic Vietnamese refugees from South Vietnam. Many of these refugees were highly qualified professionals and were familiar with European customs and culture. However, only a small percentage of these refugees came to the UK, most of them settling in the United States and France. The second exodus was made up primarily of ethnic Chinese refugees from North Vietnam. This group had lived under a Communist regime since 1954, came from poor rural and urban areas and most spoke no English (Whitham, 1983). The majority of the early arrivals in the UK during 1975 to 1982 were ethnic Chinese (Jones, 1982).

Half of those interviewed had lived in North Vietnam and half in South Vietnam. Nineteen per cent of the respondents were of ethnic Chinese origin and 81 per cent were of Vietnamese origin. Respondents of ethnic Chinese origin were more likely to have entered the country during the 1983 to 1988 period (77 per cent). Arrivals since Jones’s study were therefore different in being predominantly Vietnamese in ethnic origin. The majority had lived in urban areas, 42 per cent in cities and 38 per cent in towns. Non-quota refugees were found to have been even more likely to come from urban areas (91 per cent).
VIETNAMESE REFUGEES SINCE 1982

Just over half (51 per cent) of the respondents had spent time in the camps in Hong Kong and the majority of these had spent at least a year there (Table 3.4). More men (60 per cent) spent time in the camps than women (38 per cent). Those who arrived during 1989 to 92 were more likely to have spent time in a camp in Hong Kong (66 per cent) than intermediate arrivals (41 per cent).

Table 3.4
Length of time spent in camps in Hong Kong

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of years</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 1 year</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 year but less than 3 years</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 years but less than 6 years</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 years or more</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fifty-one per cent of the respondents had completed some form of secondary education in Vietnam. A third had completed primary level only and 16 per cent had had no education at all (Table 3.5). More men than women had completed secondary level education.

Table 3.5
Highest level of education in Vietnam

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Highest level of education in Vietnam</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fifty-seven per cent of younger respondents had completed secondary education or above, compared with 42 per cent of those aged 40 and over.

Half the respondents had not obtained any type of qualification in Vietnam (Table 3.6). One Vietnamese student described his problems in obtaining an education after the fall of Saigon:

_I was a student at secondary school when the Communists took over. After completing secondary school I had a Vietnamese qualification equivalent to A level maths, chemistry and biology. I tried to attend the university but I kept failing for political reasons. Then I tried to obtain a professional qualification, but finally I took a job in a clothing factory._
Table 3.6
Highest qualification in Vietnam

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Highest qualification</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Post-graduate Qualification</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical Qualification</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O/A Level/Baccalaureate</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Leaving</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Qualification</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>185</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Men were more likely to have qualifications (58 per cent) than women (43 per cent).

Non-quota refugees tended to be much better qualified than the Vietnamese. Eighty-five per cent had completed some form of secondary education, and 33 per cent held a degree or professional qualification.

**Employment in Vietnam**

Just over half (57 per cent) of the respondents had been in employment in their home country. The rest had either been home-carers or students. More men (64 per cent) than women (48 per cent) had had jobs in Vietnam.

The small percentage of refugees who had worked in Vietnam is explained by their ages and the length of time their lives had been disrupted. For example, one Vietnamese man aged 45 had not had the opportunity to work for almost ten years before he arrived in Britain:

I was in the army when the North took over the South. They put me in the re-education camp for seven years. When I was released my life was not like before. I had to see the local government everyday and I had to tell them where I was going. I did not have my freedom like before. I could not get a job, so that’s why I had to leave my country.

Those who had worked for the former regime faced the most difficulty. One Vietnamese woman aged over 60 described her family’s situation after the fall of Saigon:

My husband was a civil servant of the South Vietnam regime. After the communists took over South Vietnam we lived in fear of being punished. I knew that my family would face an insecure future because my husband had worked for the Saigon regime. More and more difficulties came every day. I had no choice but to flee from my country to seek freedom and to join my family.
Seventy per cent of those aged 40 or over had had a job in their home country compared to 49 per cent of those aged 18 to 39 years. This group of older respondents were also more likely to have had a professional or managerial job in Vietnam. Almost half of all jobs held in Vietnam, however, were unskilled. (Table 3.7)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of employment</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager/Employer</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled Non-Manual</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled Manual</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unskilled</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Vietnamese refugees are very different from non-quota refugees in their employment backgrounds. Thirty per cent of non-quota refugees had had professional jobs, and only 14 per cent manual jobs, in their home countries.
4 Reception in the UK

At the peak of the Vietnamese programme during 1979 to 1982, there were 46 reception centres in operation throughout Britain. The largest centre had a capacity for 730 and the smallest for 18 refugees. The centres were funded by the government and run by staff recruited by the voluntary agencies. They provided a chance for refugees to re-orientate themselves and helped arrange settlement.

As the 1979 to 1982 programme came to an end, the reception centres were gradually phased out. From 1983 to 1988, the agencies continued to provide their own reception facilities and to arrange resettlement for family reunion and boat rescue cases requiring accommodation. Agencies received a small amount of government funding to cover the reception costs for a limited number of arrivals. (Home Affairs Select Committee, 1985)

When the 2000 Programme was started in 1989, six reception centres were re-opened and funded by the government. Three are run by Refugee Action and three by the Ockenden Venture.

Reason for coming to the UK

Edholm, Roberts and Sayer (1983) found that only 12 per cent of their sample of arrivals during the first phase had specifically chosen to come to the UK. For many of these refugees the UK was seen as the last resort, having been rejected by other countries. In contrast, the majority of respondents to the present survey (87 per cent) wanted to be resettled in the UK. Of the remaining 13 per cent, 11 respondents would have preferred resettlement in the United States, five in Australia, two in Canada and six did not have any particular country in mind.

Two-thirds of the respondents (65 per cent) said that their reason for coming to the UK was that they had family already here. The remaining 35 per cent came to the UK for a variety of other reasons. Some refugees had no choice in the matter because they were rescued at sea by British vessels.

A single parent with three children who arrived in the UK in 1989 in this way describes the experience:

Before the fall of Saigon, I was on the opposite side to the Communists. After that I suffered quite a lot of hardships. I only did odd jobs for my livelihood because I had no rights under the new regime. What I needed was freedom for myself and children. However, I did not think much about leaving my home country, it meant leaving my own family. At that time,
there were two ways to have freedom: fighting or leaving. Somehow at the very late stage of the 'boat people', finally I managed to flee from my home country to seek freedom.

Older respondents in the 40 and over age group were more likely to have come to Britain because they had family here (81 per cent) than were younger respondents (58 per cent). This is partly because some younger refugees were selected on self-sufficiency grounds or others were boat rescue cases. One Vietnamese woman aged over 60 was reunited with her family in Britain in 1984:

Since the Communists took over South Vietnam, life was very difficult for the people. The government controlled everything and not enough food was provided to my family. My eldest son was put in prison by the government and punished. He was in jail for three years. In 1979, my son had a chance and fled to Britain. I came to Britain for family reunion.

The majority of the respondents (73 per cent) came to the UK accompanied by other family members, four per cent with friends, three per cent with people they did not know, and 20 per cent came entirely on their own.

Reception centres
Half of the respondents went to reception centres. They included almost all those who came for reasons other than family reunion (95 per cent), and those who were part of the 2,000 Programme, even if they were later to join their families already here. Most other family reunion cases moved in immediately with their relatives.

The majority of the respondents in the survey (68 per cent) were assisted by the Ockenden Venture in reception, 19 per cent by Refugee Action, 9 per cent by Save the Children, and one per cent by the Refugee Council, while three per cent could not remember. The predominance of Ockenden Venture reflects the large proportion of the interview sample from the Midlands and Manchester, areas for which Ockenden was responsible.

One of the aims of the Joint Committee for Refugees from Vietnam (JCRV) for the early programme of Vietnamese arrivals from 1975 to 1982 was to limit the time spent in reception centres to three months. In practice many stayed longer because of difficulties in obtaining housing offers from local authorities and housing associations. Jones (1982) found that only 10 per cent of his sample had been resettled within three months of arrival. The average time spent in reception at that time was six months.

Most arrivals during 1983 to 1992 also spent over three months in reception centres. Only just over one-third of the respondents stayed three months or less. (Table 4.2)

Most of those who went to a reception centre expressed satisfaction with its size, although some found it too large and some too small.
Table 4.2
Number of months in reception centres

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of months</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-3 months</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-6 months</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-11 months</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12-48 months</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Resettlement
Research on the early programme identified institutionalisation and apathy as dangers resulting from prolonged stays in reception centres. It was reported that some refugees lost the ability and the desire to function independently and came to rely heavily on support workers. This was particularly true for those who had already spent long periods of time in the Hong Kong camps (Levin, 1981; Jones, 1982; Dalglish, 1989).

Two-thirds of those respondents in the present survey who had been to reception centres felt that their stay adequately prepared them for coping with daily life in Britain. Older respondents aged 40 and over were more likely to say this than the younger ones. Older respondents, of course, may have had fewer requirements on resettlement than the young in terms of employment, training and education.

Only a fifth of the respondents had friends in the reception centres whom they had known before they left Vietnam, but three-quarters said they made new friends there. Just over half (56 per cent) knew Vietnamese people who were already living in the UK, and almost all of them wanted to be resettled nearby. Seventy-three per cent moved from the accommodation first arranged for them so that they could be closer to these acquaintances, and almost all continue to visit them. Respondents aged 40 and over were more likely to have changed address (86 per cent) than those in the 18-39 group (64 per cent).

Almost all who wanted to be resettled in a particular area were resettled there. It is worth noting, despite the concentration of Vietnamese communities in London, that those not rejoining their families had no particular preference for that city. Of those who said they would prefer a particular area, 34 per cent wanted to be resettled in Manchester, 34 per cent in London, 19 per cent in Portsmouth, 10 per cent in Birmingham and three per cent in other locations.

Assistance during resettlement
Two-thirds of the respondents were helped by voluntary organisations when they first moved, 19 per cent by neighbours, 16 per cent by others (mainly relatives), and six per cent by no one. Sixty-four per cent of those who were assisted by either voluntary organisations or support groups were regularly visited for periods of up to six
VIETNAMESE REFUGEES SINCE 1982

months, 22 per cent were regularly visited for 6 to 11 months, and 14 per cent were paid regular visits for a year or more. Most of those (90 per cent) who received any type of assistance felt it was adequate. Well over half said this help was still available if they needed it.

Respondents who had arrived under the 2,000 Programme tended to have a better experience of reception than the intermediate refugees. The majority (80 per cent) of the 2,000 Programme arrivals felt their stay in the reception centre had adequately prepared them for daily life, whereas only 54 per cent of the intermediate refugees felt the same. Moreover, all of those who arrived as part of the 2,000 Programme said that the help they received from voluntary organisations or support groups in resettlement was adequate, compared to 85 per cent of the intermediate refugees. These higher levels of satisfaction reflect the fact that voluntary agencies assisting refugees under the 2000 Programme received Government funding, while resources for those outside the programme will have been much less substantial.
5 Language

Ability to speak English is vital to resettlement. It opens up a range of possibilities, including education, employment and training opportunities, and enhances the ability to cope with daily life and interact with the host community. Refugees vary greatly in how well they respond to English language training or any other form of education. Their motivations and backgrounds are important in this respect (Levin, 1981).

Language backgrounds
None of the refugees interviewed had English as their first language. Eighty-seven per cent spoke Vietnamese and 13 per cent Chinese. Only 31 per cent had studied English before they came to Britain. As we have seen in Chapter 3, many of the refugees had little experience of formal education in Vietnam and some may have been illiterate even in their own language. Only one-third (33 per cent) of the respondents could speak any English on arrival in the UK and, of these, 56 per cent could only speak a few words, and 34 per cent just enough to get by. Only 10 per cent rated themselves as having conversational English, and none as being fluent.

Respondents who had obtained qualifications in Vietnam were more likely to have studied English before coming to Britain and to be able to speak some English on arrival. Those who had spent time in the camps in Hong Kong were less likely to have studied English before. The Home Affairs Select Committee (1985) recommended that more could be achieved in the Hong Kong camps to prepare the refugees through education, language and skills training.

English language courses
The majority of the respondents (78 per cent) had taken at least one English class in the UK. There were higher rates of participation among Vietnamese refugees than among other refugee groups. Only 60 per cent of non-quota refugees had taken English classes. This difference may be largely explained by the fact that many of the Vietnamese refugees had been to reception centres, where English language classes were offered on location, because 87 per cent of them had taken English classes, compared to 69 per cent of those who had not attended a reception centre. However, there is some evidence that continued language training after resettlement is also important (Levin, 1981).

Men, younger respondents and those living in the south of England were more likely to attend English classes. Almost all of those who had completed some type of qualification in Vietnam also did so.
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The majority of those taking classes (65 per cent) only completed a single course; 24 per cent completed two, and 11 per cent three or more. English language courses are graduated according to the student's starting ability. There are courses available for 'absolute beginner', 'false beginner' (for those who have studied English previously but require a refresher course), 'intermediate', and 'advanced' levels. In terms of the highest level of English the respondents had achieved, the majority had only completed beginners-level English. (Table 5.1)

Table 5.1
Highest level of English language course completed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course level</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beginners</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>False beginners</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O level</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note:
*Total number of respondents taking English language courses.

The younger respondents aged 18 to 39 were more likely to have progressed beyond the beginner level of English (40 per cent) than those aged 40 and over (24 per cent). With time, however, respondents tended to progress to higher levels. More of those who had arrived during 1983 to 88, than of later arrivals, had completed an English course beyond beginner level.

Thirty-four per cent of respondents had taken their English courses at reception centres. The other main providers were Adult Education and Colleges of Further Education.

English courses were rated very positively. Eighty-three per cent thought they had improved their English and 76 per cent their knowledge of British society and culture.

Level of English language ability
At the time of interview the majority still had limited English: 50 per cent could only speak a few words, and 24 per cent just enough to get by. Sixteen per cent described their English as conversational, and 10 per cent fluent. More of the younger respondents felt that their English was good. Jones (1982) also found lower levels of proficiency among older refugees. Language proficiency tends to improve at a quicker rate for children than for adults (Levin, 1981). As a result adults can become alienated from their children as the latter learn the language and adapt to Western society. Mother-tongue teaching is a useful way to maintain family harmony and cultural values.
Respondents who had spent time in the camps in Hong Kong were less likely to rate their present level of English highly. Only four per cent of those who had spent three years or more in the camps rated themselves as conversational or fluent.

Again there was evidence of improvement with time in the country. Thirty-seven per cent of those who had arrived in the UK during 1983 to 88 rated their present level of English as conversational or fluent, and only eight per cent of those who had arrived more recently.

The true test of English language ability is whether the refugees are able to cope in their everyday activities. Given the respondents’ levels of English at the time of the interviews, it is not surprising that many were still encountering difficulties in the most routine tasks. Only 10 per cent spoke English regularly at home. Thirty-nine per cent still encountered problems when shopping. Seventy-one per cent needed help filling out official forms. Only 32 per cent of the sample felt their English was good enough to get a job.
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6 Employment

A number of reports have emphasised the crucial role of employment in resettlement (Stein, 1979; Goldlust and Richmond, 1984; Field, 1985; Phillips, 1990; Clark, 1992; Carey-Wood, Duke, Karr and Marshall, 1994). Employment provides refugees with the opportunity to practice language skills, interact with the community and learn more about the culture and traditions of the new country. Most importantly, employment has great psychological benefits for refugees. Jobs enable refugees to become economically independent and to regain their confidence which, in many cases, has been shattered by the trauma of fleeing from their home countries.

The jobs refugees are able to obtain when they first arrive in a new country tend to be menial and unskilled, with little prospect for promotion. This is due to the disadvantages they face in the labour market. These might include language problems, discrimination, non-recognition of foreign qualifications, licensing restrictions, regulations requiring citizenship or permanent residency for certain jobs, lack of information about the job market, and pressure to enter the job market too quickly. Stein (1979) argues that the most crucial factor affecting occupational transfer is the "international mobility" of the refugee's skills. Some skills and occupations held by refugees from less developed countries are often specific to a particular region or culture and may not transfer to the new society.

In addition to the handicaps mentioned above, the Vietnamese arrived in the UK during a period of high unemployment and recession. This is also true for the early wave of arrivals in 1979 and those arriving in the 1990s.

Main economic activities
There were low rates of employment among the respondents interviewed, although men were slightly more likely to be employed than women. Women were more likely to see their role as looking after the home and family (see Table 6.1).

Table 6.1
Main activity by gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main activity</th>
<th>% All</th>
<th>% Male</th>
<th>% Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student/Training</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Looking after Home/Family</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long-term Sick or Disabled</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>(185)</td>
<td>(106)</td>
<td>(79)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

25
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A slightly higher rate of employment (27 per cent) was found among non-quota refugees, although only marginally so among men (29 per cent). Vietnamese women had lower rates of employment (11 per cent) than non-quota refugee women (23 per cent).

The economically active: the employed and the unemployed
Respondents were defined as economically active if they were either working or seeking work at the time of interview. This group does not include individuals on government training schemes. They comprised 55 per cent of the total sample.

Of this group, 38 per cent were currently working in paid jobs. The unemployment rate of 62 per cent is not dissimilar to the 57 per cent found for non-quota refugees. The unemployment rates of both Vietnamese and non-quota refugees are extremely high compared to the national rate of 8 per cent and even the rate of 24 per cent for ethnic minorities living in Inner London (OPCS, 1992).

Persons who had attained higher levels of education in Vietnam were more likely to be employed in the UK: 53 per cent of those who had some qualification from Vietnam were in jobs, as against 20 per cent of those without. Among non-quota refugees, original qualifications were similarly an important predictor of employment.

Spending time in the camps in Hong Kong was also associated with unemployment. Almost three-quarters (73 per cent) of the respondents who had spent time in such camps were unemployed. This was due to the high rates of unemployment among those who had spent three years or more in the camps (92 per cent). Those who had spent less than three years in the camps did not seem to have been especially disadvantaged in obtaining employment (46 per cent unemployed).

Employment situations improved with time. Refugees who arrived during the 1983 to 1988 period were more likely to be employed (53 per cent) than those who arrived later (11 per cent). Wiermair (1971), from a study of Hungarian refugees in Canada, hypothesised that after three to four years in a new country, refugees were near the end of their occupational adjustment. This period allowed time to acquire the language and retrain if necessary. Little occupational change occurred after the initial four years. Generally, "...if problems are not solved early, determination and drive wane, discouragement sets in, and the refugee accepts the changes in his life and status." (Wiermair, 1971, p. 35)

Respondents who had better English language ability, or had been on training courses, were more likely to be employed. Sixty-five per cent of the respondents who rated themselves as having conversational or fluent English were employed, compared with 26 per cent of the rest. Sixty-three per cent of the respondents who had attended an educational or vocational course were employed, compared to 30 per cent of those who had not done so.

The employed
As stated previously, 21 per cent of the sample were employed in paid jobs at the time of the interview. This is a slight improvement over the first arrivals, who had an
employment rate of 16 per cent according to Jones (1982), but the present sample had been in the country longer, on average, by the time of interview.

Relative to other refugee groups, Vietnamese who had jobs were working on lower rungs of the occupational ladder. Over half of non-quota refugees were working in professional or managerial positions, whereas only ten (26 per cent) of the Vietnamese had non-manual positions. Most were skilled manual (53 per cent) or unskilled (21 per cent). Similar results were found for the earliest Vietnamese arrivals (Jones, 1982). In the present study, the majority were found to be working as employees, but six were self-employed and one was an employer.

Over half of the respondents (63 per cent) expressed positive satisfaction with their current jobs, but 13 (34 per cent) felt there were more suitable jobs for them. Seventeen were looking for other jobs (42 per cent). Age, language ability on arrival and family size were important factors affecting the refugees’ ability to attain a former occupational status (Stein, 1979). Older refugees have more difficulty adjusting to their new society, and have fewer years left to work. The time taken to learn a new language adds to the problem, causing the refugee’s job skills to grow stale and delaying access to the labour market. Large families put pressure on refugees to maximise income and may force them to accept any type of work instead of pursuing a suitable career pattern. With regard to the Vietnamese population in the UK, two of these obstacles are evident. The majority could not speak any English on arrival and their families tend to be large; however, their age distribution is still relatively young.

Job-Seeking
Seventeen respondents (45 per cent) found their current jobs through family or friends, seven (18 per cent) set up their own businesses, six (16 per cent) replied to advertisements in the newspapers, three (eight per cent) directly approached their employer, three (eight per cent) used the Job Centre and two (five per cent) were helped by their community group. This indicates reliance on informal contacts in looking for and securing employment by the refugees in the survey. This finding is common to other research on both Vietnamese and non-quota refugees. (Fraser, 1988; Carey-Wood, Duke, Kurn and Marshall, 1994.)

Previous employment experience
Only 30 per cent of all the respondents interviewed had ever been employed in the UK. Of this group, 58 per cent had had only one job, but 20 per cent had had three jobs or more. In comparison, more non-quota refugees (44 per cent) had had jobs in the UK.

Younger respondents were more likely to have had a job in the UK (41 per cent) than those aged 40 and over (12 per cent). Only 18 per cent of the respondents who were currently unemployed had ever had a job. In terms of regional variations, Vietnamese refugees who lived in the South of England were more likely to have worked since they had been in Britain than those living in the North. Sixty-five per cent of those currently living in Hampshire had had a job compared to 34 per cent in London and the South-East, 20 per cent in Birmingham and 20 per cent in Manchester.
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There had been considerable improvements in job status over time. Comparisons of first and current jobs over time (Table 6.2) also show a trend towards self-employment, permanent and full-time work, and increased job satisfaction. Similar results were found for non-quota refugees.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 6.2</th>
<th>First or only job n=31</th>
<th>Current job n=38</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employees</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-employed</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanent</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporary</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissatisfied</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**The unemployed**

Just under half (44 per cent) of respondents not employed at the time of the interview were looking for a job. Eighty-nine per cent of them were registered as unemployed at the Unemployment Benefit Office. Compared to those who had successfully found jobs, this group was even more reliant on friends, relatives and their community groups in seeking jobs.

The majority had not applied for any jobs in the previous two months. Many refugees appeared to feel discouraged by the current job market. Field (1985) suggests that refugees may be willing to accept menial, unskilled work initially. However, in the case of the Vietnamese, many were unable to secure even the most menial of jobs.

The difficulty most frequently mentioned by respondents when applying for jobs was their lack of work experience in the UK, followed by their lack of English language ability and UK qualifications (Table 6.3).

Stein (1979) suggests there are three main factors that have particularly hindered the Vietnamese in the United States in terms of occupational success. These are the disparity in culture between Vietnamese and the host society, the lack of an established ethnic community to assist the new refugees, and the economic recession. These factors would also seem to apply to Vietnamese in the UK.
Table 6.3
Difficulties faced by respondents when applying for jobs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Difficulty in applying for jobs</th>
<th>Number n=65</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of UK work experience</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language problems</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of UK qualifications</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of confidence</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racial or ethnic reasons</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recession</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No references</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Childcare problems</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview process</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualifications not recognised</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Financial situation

Given the difficulties and sensitivities in collecting information on income, respondents were simply asked the sources of income for their household, including income of family members and others in the household, as well as the main respondent.

Only one-quarter of all households had a wage-earner, with a further three per cent living on business profits. The majority of the households were dependent on benefits, pensions, etc. (Table 6.4).

Table 6.4
Sources of income for households

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sources of income</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Benefits</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salary/Wages</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pension</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Grant</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Profit</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loans from Family/Friends</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income from Rents</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training Allowance</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income from Investments</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Income</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>(185)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents were asked to assess their own financial situation on a scale based on borrowing and saving. The majority of respondents said they had enough money to cover their expenses. (Table 6.5)
Table 6.5
Respondent’s assessment of present financial situation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Having to borrow money</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having to draw on savings</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enough to cover expenses</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saving occasionally</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saving regularly</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On the other hand, 46 per cent of non-quota refugees said they had to borrow money, and only 37 per cent said they had enough money to cover expenses. Vietnamese households were apparently more successful in making ends meet. Edholm, Roberts and Sayer (1983) also found that the Vietnamese refugees were quite content in the UK in terms of their material circumstances. This might be explained by the different backgrounds and lifestyles to which the Vietnamese were accustomed before coming to Britain, and hence their levels of expectation. It may also be that there were other informal sources of income not covered by the survey.
7 Education and training

Unlike non-quota refugees, who often have good educational backgrounds, many of the Vietnamese refugees arrived in the UK with no formal education. Many of the skills they had used in Vietnam were not transferable or marketable in the UK economy. They therefore had major training and educational needs.

Home country qualifications
Just over half of the respondents had qualifications from Vietnam. Only seven had attempted to have these qualifications evaluated and recognised in the UK, and four had been successful in doing so. Most of their qualifications were very low level (i.e., school-leaving), so that recognition was not relevant to the types of jobs or training for which they would be suited.

Educational and vocational courses
Only 22 per cent had taken, or were presently taking, an educational or vocational course. In contrast, 45 per cent of non-quota refugees had been on courses. The courses taken most frequently by the Vietnamese were vocational training courses and GCSE/O-levels (Table 7.1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of course</th>
<th>Number who completed course</th>
<th>Number who are presently taking course</th>
<th>Number who started course, but did not finish</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degree</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Qualification</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocational Qualification</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A levels</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access Course</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GCSE/O levels</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All those who had completed or started a course thought that it would improve their job prospects. The majority also expressed satisfaction with the course.

Educational and vocational courses were associated with higher rates of labour force participation. Sixty per cent of the respondents who had been on a course had had a job, compared to 21 per cent of the rest.
VIETNAMESE REFUGEES SINCE 1982

Characteristics of respondents taking courses
Respondents were more likely to have taken an educational or vocational course if they were under 40 years of age (32 per cent), had qualifications from Vietnam (30 per cent), or had not spent time in the Hong Kong camps (32 per cent).

Length of time in Britain also made a difference. A higher proportion (28 per cent) of the refugees who arrived during 1983 to 1988 had been on a course than of those who arrived later (11 per cent).

Respondents who had taken English courses (27 per cent) and who had better English language ability (56 per cent) were also more likely to take an educational or vocational course.

Funding for courses
Forty-four per cent of those taking courses had been funded by the Local Education Authority, 19 per cent by welfare benefits, 14 per cent by the training agency or MSC, 12 per cent were self-funded, seven per cent were supported by their families, and four per cent were financed by other means. The same sources of funding were used by non-quota refugees to roughly the same extent.

Government training schemes
Thirty-nine per cent of the sample had been registered as unemployed and applied for, or taken part in, a government training scheme. Men were more likely to have done so (53 per cent) than women (19 per cent). Younger respondents aged under 40 were also more likely to have been in this situation. Those who were currently employed were more likely to have been on a government training scheme (55 per cent) than those who were unemployed (16 per cent).

There are two main types of programmes provided by the Employment Service and by Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs): job search schemes and work training. A summary of these schemes as they apply to refugees is in Carey-Wood, Duke, Karn and Marshall, 1994.

Job search schemes
These schemes seek to increase the skills or resources of job-seekers to find appropriate work. All job search schemes were available through local Job Centres. They assumed that clients were adequately skilled for the work they wanted to do, but lacked the skills or knowledge for effective competition for job vacancies.

The only job search schemes used with any frequency by respondents were Job Clubs and Restart (Table 7.2). The same two schemes were also those used most frequently by non-quota refugees seeking work. However, the Vietnamese had a lower take-up rate for all of the schemes compared to non-quota refugees.
EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Two-thirds said they found these schemes useful in finding jobs. In fact, 54 per cent of the respondents who had been on a job search scheme had found a job, compared to 21 per cent who had not been on a scheme.

For all the job search schemes in this survey, younger respondents were more likely to make use of them than older people. The longer they had been in the country, too, the more likely they were to have used these schemes: 53 per cent of the respondents who arrived during the 1983 to 88 period had used a job search scheme compared with 18 per cent of those who arrived afterwards.

Table 7.2
Job search schemes used by respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of scheme</th>
<th>Number of respondents who used scheme</th>
<th>Number of respondents who found the scheme useful</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Restart</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Club</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Search Seminars</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Interview Guarantee</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel to Interview</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Review Workshop</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Training schemes

These schemes provide occupational training and work experience. Training programmes were administered by local Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs), although they were usually accessed through Job Centres. Employment Training was the programme used most frequently (19 persons). No others had been used by more than two respondents at most. This was also the most popular programme among the non-quota refugees, although, once again, the Vietnamese had lower take-up rates on each of the training schemes.

The majority of those who had been on a training scheme found it useful. Sixty-two per cent had found a job, compared to 22 per cent of those who had not been on a scheme.

Respondents were more likely to have attended any of these training programmes if they had better English (60 per cent of respondents who had conversational or fluent English), had not spent time in the camps in Hong Kong (48 per cent) or had been in Britain for at least five years (45 per cent).

Those who had been on a training scheme were more likely to have taken other courses as well (62 per cent, compared to 10 per cent of those who had not).
Educational aspirations
The majority of the sample (73 per cent) said they would like to study or train in the UK. This figure was slightly lower for non-quota refugees (61 per cent).

More men (78 per cent) said they would like to study or train than women (65 per cent). Younger respondents were more interested (83 per cent) than the older (57 per cent). Respondents who had arrived in Britain more recently expressed greater interest in further study than the earlier arrivals. The most popular type of course to which they aspired was English language training (Table 7.3).

Almost all who said they would like to complete further training or studying saw obstacles in the way of doing so. Forty-one per cent said it was difficult to study due to language problems, 23 per cent due to looking after children, 18 per cent for financial reasons, seven per cent lack of time, two per cent because they had full-time employment, and nine per cent gave other reasons.

Table 7.3
Types of courses for future study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English language course</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree course</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GCSE/O levels</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Qualification</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocational Qualification</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government Training Scheme</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A levels</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>135*</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:
* Number of respondents who would like to study or train
8 Housing

In January 1979, Britain agreed to accept 1,500 Vietnamese refugees. After agreeing to receive a further quota of 10,000 in July of the same year, it was decided to disperse groups of refugees across many housing authority areas. This policy was intended to prevent the formation of 'ghettos' in areas where there were already high concentrations of ethnic minorities and to facilitate the integration of the refugees into British society. Dispersal would also ensure that any one local authority would not be overburdened by being responsible for accommodating and resettling large numbers of refugees. Due to media coverage of the 'boat people', housing offers from local authorities were initially abundant, but they declined sharply before the quota was filled. Agencies were forced to deviate from the dispersal policy and accept housing offers from any locality.

The dispersal policy was further undermined by the isolation experienced by many refugees, high unemployment in many areas of initial settlement, and local authorities' lack of resources to provide for the special needs of small Vietnamese communities. As a result, secondary migration occurred as refugees moved into areas where there were larger Vietnamese communities or better prospects for employment and training. Robinson (1993) constructed chained migration histories for 3,101 Vietnamese households over the period 1978 to 1988 and analysed the complete records of 456 households over a period of five years from resettlement. This analysis indicated that one-third of those who moved had changed their address within one year of resettlement and over half had made their first move within two years. This indicated substantial dissatisfaction with the accommodation provided through the dispersal policy. The South-West, Yorkshire, the North, Wales, and Scotland experienced a fall in Vietnamese households, while the South-East, West Midlands, and the North-West benefited from secondary migration (Robinson and Hale, 1989; Robinson 1993).

The dispersal policy was therefore modified for the 2000 Programme, distributing arrivals among a smaller number of areas where there were already Vietnamese communities. On the whole these refugees have moved directly from reception centres into permanent local authority or housing association accommodation close to their relatives and friends in the UK. Compared to the first programme there has been more residential stability (see next section).

Mobility
Thirty-four per cent of those interviewed in this study had only lived at one address since they had been in the UK, 45 per cent at two addresses, 14 per cent at three addresses and seven per cent at four or more addresses. (This does not include time spent in reception centres.) In comparison, non-quota refugees experienced greater housing mobility: only six per cent had lived at one address and 29 per cent at four or more addresses.
Table 8.1 shows that just over half of the respondents who lived in more than one address remained at their first address for one year or more.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 1 year</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Year but less than 2 Years</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Years but less than 3 Years</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Years or more</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:
- Total number of respondents who lived at more than one address in the UK.

Most of the respondents (81 per cent) said they wanted to live in their current area.

The majority (84 per cent) remained in the area in which they were initially resettled.

This finding demonstrates relative stability of housing and area of settlement for this group of refugees.

The majority (84 per cent) of respondents had lived in their current accommodation for at least one year. In comparison, non-quota refugees had spent less time at their current addresses. Thirty per cent of non-quota refugees had lived in their current accommodation for less than one year.

Help in finding accommodation

The majority of respondents either first moved in with family or friends already in the UK (almost half of them) or their housing was arranged through a reception centre.

Over half the sample (57 per cent) found their current accommodation through local authorities or housing associations (including waiting lists, nominations and being accepted as homeless). 27 per cent were helped by their community group, 11 per cent by family and friends, and 5 per cent by private agencies or advertisements. In comparison, non-quota refugees (for whom, of course, there was no help through reception centres) tended to rely less on finding their current accommodation through the public sector or their community groups, and relied more on the private sector or family and friends.

Type of accommodation

The majority of respondents (65 per cent) were living in detached, semi-detached or terraced houses at the time of interview. 28 per cent in flats, seven per cent in maisonettes, and one per cent in bedsits or shared accommodation. None were living in hostels, hotels, bed and breakfast or short life accommodation. In contrast, non-quota refugees less often lived in detached or terraced houses, and more often in flats, maisonettes, bedsits, shared quarters, and hostels or bed and breakfast accommodation.
The difference in types of housing between the two groups of refugees can be explained by the greater number of single person households among the non-quota refugees.

**Tenure distribution**

Bell and Clinton (1993) suggest that the Vietnamese have little choice but to live in local authority accommodation. This is due historically to dependence on housing offers from local authorities in the first phase of Vietnamese arrivals. High unemployment rates, low household incomes and large family groups have also restricted choice.

Most of the respondents who had lived at more than one address in the UK rented their first accommodation from the public sector. Table 8.2 demonstrates that over time respondents have become less reliant on their relatives to house them and moved into their own accommodation, but the majority are still dependent on public sector housing. There has also been a slight shift towards home ownership.

**Table 8.2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tenure</th>
<th>First address</th>
<th>Current address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Council</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing Association/Trust/Co-op</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Landlord</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renting from relative or living rent-free</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mortgage</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>(122)*</td>
<td>(122)*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Total number of respondents who lived at more than one address in the UK.

In contrast, 49 per cent of non-quota refugees first lived in private rented accommodation, 27 per cent lived rent free with friends and relatives, and only 20 per cent lived in council or housing association property. (The remaining four per cent were at first placed in detention centres pending consideration of their asylum applications.)

Most of the Vietnamese (90 per cent) were renting their accommodation from the public sector, at the time of interview, half from a local authority and half from a housing association. Of the remaining 10 per cent, four were renting from a private landlord, four from a relative or friend or living rent free, and 11 were home owners with a mortgage. In contrast, more non-quota refugees were renting from the private sector (25 per cent) or owned their own homes (12 per cent) when interviewed.

Quilgars (1993) argues that the housing needs of programme refugees, namely the Vietnamese, are met to a greater extent than those of asylum-seekers and non-quota refugees, by means of reception centres. The Vietnamese therefore appear to be in a privileged position compared to other refugee groups in terms of housing.
VIETNAMESE REFUGEES SINCE 1982

Nevertheless, Bell and Clinton (1993) found that the quality of the housing allocated to the Vietnamese in London was very poor and they often lived in overcrowded conditions. One reason for this is that the Vietnamese prefer to live together in extended family units and feel obliged to share their accommodation with friends and relatives in need of a home. With limited housing alternatives, they are then often forced to live in crowded conditions.

Size of accommodation
Forty-four per cent of the respondents in this study who lived in more than one address shared their first home with another household. Almost all of them were living with relatives or friends already settled in the UK. It is not surprising that 61 per cent felt this accommodation was too small. This situation has improved over time, so that only 10 per cent were sharing their current homes with another household. In the case of non-quota refugees, 83 per cent were living in shared accommodation when they first arrived or were temporarily housed by family and friends. However, this situation also improved over time, with 23 per cent sharing their current accommodation with another household.

Nine per cent of the respondents were currently living in one-bedroom accommodation, 22 per cent had two bedrooms, 52 per cent three bedrooms, and 17 per cent four or more bedrooms. A quarter of respondents thought their present accommodation was too small, as was found for non-quota refugees.

Amenities
Table 8.3 lists goods and amenities found in the average British household and compares respondents’ ownership of, or access to, them. They less often had use of washing machines, freezers and cars than the general population. Those who lived in households with wage-earners were more likely to have such amenities.

Non-quota refugees were often less well-off – for instance, only 25 per cent had access to a car, 51 per cent a washing machine, and 33 per cent a freezer.

Eighty-three per cent of the respondents said that their heating was good or adequate, again a higher figure than for non-quota refugees (72 per cent).

Table 8.3
Amenities among Vietnamese refugees and general population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Vietnamese refugees</th>
<th>G.H.S. 1990</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Television</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washing Machine</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fridge</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freezer</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of a Car</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Satisfaction with first address
Twenty-seven per cent of the respondents were satisfied with their first address, 15 per cent were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, and 58 per cent were dissatisfied. Rather more non-quota refugees (39 per cent) were satisfied with their first home.

The main reason for moving from their first address was to obtain more suitable housing; just 13 per cent moved for employment reasons and 15 per cent for other reasons.

Future housing mobility
Forty-one per cent of the respondents said they would like to move from their current accommodation, slightly fewer than non-quota refugees (50 per cent). The majority (77 per cent) wanted larger or better accommodation. Over one-third (35 per cent) said that their current accommodation needed repairs and this group was more likely to want to move.

Just over a fifth (22 per cent) of all respondents wanted to move to another area, although almost all within the same city or town.

Experience of homelessness
Ten per cent of the sample had, at some time, been homeless in the UK. The rate among non-quota refugees was much higher at 27 per cent.

The definition of homelessness included sleeping on the streets, living in bed and breakfast or hotel accommodation found by the local authority, living in the Homeless Families Unit, living in a direct access/emergency hostel and staying with family or friends/sleeping on sofas or floors. In most homelessness cases, the Vietnamese respondents had temporarily moved in with family or friends when they first arrived and were looking for permanent accommodation:

When we first came to the UK we lived with my older brother’s family. After a month my brother and his wife did not want us to stay in their house. They asked us to move out and we had nowhere to live. We got help from Vietnamese workers to apply for us to be re-housed. (Vietnamese woman)

When I first came I lived temporarily with my friend in his house. After that there was a conflict between my family and his family. Then I decided to go to homeless accommodation. I lived there for one week then a Vietnamese worker helped me get our own home. (Vietnamese man)

These examples also show that the settlement of refugees in existing households often leads to overcrowding and conflict, a problem that was found for refugees of other nationalities in the earlier study (Carey-Wood, Duke, Karm and Marshall, 1994). Independent housing needs to be one of the primary goals of early assistance.
VIETNAMESE REFUGEES SINCE 1982
9 Settlement in the community

Refugee community groups
Several studies have pointed to the important role community groups play in helping refugees adjust to their new environment (Rogg, 1974; Jones, 1982; Dalglish, 1989; Gold, 1992; Beiser, 1993; Carey-Wood, Duke, Kam and Marshall, 1994). Refugee community groups are voluntary organisations managed by refugees themselves. They are therefore specific to national, ethnic or cultural group and may act on a local or countrywide basis, or both. The functions of the Vietnamese community groups include finding housing, arranging furniture and providing advice on health, social security, education, language courses and vocational training. Longer-term functions include the maintenance of culture and customs by promoting community activities and encouraging interaction with the wider community.

Rogg (1974) studied the influence of a strong refugee community on the economic adjustment of Cuban refugees in West New York. He found that it assisted economic adjustment by providing a relevant comparison group against which refugees could evaluate their own occupational performance, rather than by reference to American society generally. The community acts as a cushion against loss of former occupational status.

Eighty per cent of Vietnamese respondents in this survey said there was a group particularly representing their community, and almost all (90 per cent) of these respondents had had contact with this group.

Agency contact
Respondents were asked about their contact with various agencies and organisations and how they judged their helpfulness (Table 9.1). These figures indicate that Vietnamese had lower rates of contact with all agencies and organisations, except Social Services, than non-quota refugees. Vietnamese refugees who had had contact, however, generally found them more helpful than did other refugees. The difference with respect to the Refugee Council can be explained by the existence of other national organisations specifically assisting Vietnamese refugees, such as Refugee Action and the Ockenden Venture. All those who attended reception centres would have had contact with such voluntary agencies.
Table 9.1
Contact and helpfulness of agencies and organisations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Vietnamese % Contact</th>
<th>Vietnamese % who found helpful</th>
<th>Non-Quota % Contact</th>
<th>Non-Quota % who found helpful</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DSS</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizen’s Advice Bureau</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law Centre</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Services</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racial Equality Council</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refugee Council</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Health and health services
Fifteen per cent of the respondents said that ill health had affected their life in Britain. This is very close to the figure of 16 per cent found for non-quota refugees. Among the Vietnamese, men and older refugees tended to have suffered more from ill health than women and younger respondents. For example, one man aged 50 described how his health had seriously affected settlement in the UK:

Long-term illness prevents me from studying English therefore I cannot understand what is going on around me. My illness prevents me from studying or working as normal people do. It makes my life worrying and depressing.

Eight per cent (14 respondents) said they had a disability. Of this group, only six respondents were registered as disabled. Almost all (98 per cent) of the respondents were registered with a doctor and 86 per cent were registered with a dentist.

Just over half of the sample (55 per cent) said they had experienced worry, stress, anxiety or depression since arriving in Britain, slightly fewer than among non-quota refugees. The Vietnamese refugees who experienced such problems attributed them to various causes. (See Table 9.2)

Table 9.2
Causes of worry, stress, anxiety or depression

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cause</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Events in Home Country</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future in the UK</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isolation</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ill Health</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Problems</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (language, racial harassment and weather)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SETTLEMENT IN THE COMMUNITY

One woman who arrived in 1992 experienced difficulties in resettling and was suffering acute depression:

*It seems that I am unable to adapt to a new life in a strange country. I feel extremely lonely. I have had a nervous breakdown, sometimes I just want to kill myself.*

However, over time, it may be that these feelings of stress subside. For example, one respondent who arrived in the UK in 1983 told the interviewer:

*When we first came to the UK, the climate and the isolation made me very depressed. Life was very difficult. However, day by day I got used to it. I am now quite happy.*

Another woman told the interviewer of racial harassment which had caused her much stress and anxiety:

*I don’t feel happy because I and my son dare not to go out of my door, except when I do with my husband even to go out to the garden. I feel like I am a prisoner. The neighbours shout at me and throw things at me. They throw stones and rubbish at my door. They ask me why I don’t move house and stay away from them.*

The majority of the sample (81 per cent) said they had experienced homesickness since arriving in Britain, very similar to the proportion of non-quota refugees.

Only 52 per cent of those who had experienced health problems had sought help. When they did so, they relied heavily on informal sources of help, such as family and friends and their community groups (Table 9.3). Almost all (94 per cent) felt the assistance they received with their problems was helpful.

**Table 9.3**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of help</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Friends/relatives</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Group</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctor</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospital</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>96</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Field (1985) suggests that ethnic minority groups may differ in their willingness to seek psychiatric help. They may also have different ideas as to what constitutes a psychiatric problem. Language and cultural differences may lead to refugees being wrongly diagnosed as mentally ill. Field (1985) concludes that, in order to remedy mental health problems, the language and customs of the receiving country must be taught to the
refugees, but at the same time efforts must be made to preserve their own culture by facilitating and encouraging the formation of refugee community groups.

Forbes-Martin (1992) points out that health services may be inappropriate to the needs of refugees. For example, the Western concept of mental health therapy is non-existent in many cultures. Refugees may be reluctant to utilise health services unless they are more understandable and culturally accessible to them.

Contact with the British community
In general, the Vietnamese refugees had very limited involvement with British community life. For example, only six per cent had joined or taken part in any associations or groups organised by British people. Non-quota refugees had higher rates of participation in British associations (20 per cent).

Half the ethnic Vietnamese respondents belonged to a religious group, but only one-fifth of the ethnic Chinese respondents did. Ninety per cent of the respondents living in Manchester belonged to a religious group, 40 per cent of those in Birmingham, 30 per cent in Hampshire and 14 per cent in London and the South-East.

Just under half (47 per cent) said they had struck up acquaintance with a British person since they had been resettled. It is not surprising that the respondents who would have had the most opportunities through employment and education were more likely to say this.

The longer respondents had been in Britain the more likely they were to join British groups and get to know British people. Sixty-one per cent of those who arrived during the 1983 to 1988 period had got to know British people, and only 24 per cent of those who arrived later. Better English skills were also associated with closer relations with the British community. Those who had taken English classes in the UK were more likely to know British people (54 per cent) than those who had not (22 per cent). Respondents who rated their English as conversational or fluent were even more likely to get to know British people (83 per cent).

Voluntary work
One-third (35 per cent) of the sample had done voluntary or unpaid work since they had been in the UK. Similar rates of voluntary activity were found among non-quota refugee groups. The types of work were varied. Fifty-six per cent had organised cultural events, 29 per cent had done interpreting and translating, 27 per cent had helped to provide welfare and advice services, 24 per cent had taught religion and culture, 23 per cent had helped in fundraising campaigns, 13 per cent had carried out administrative and secretarial tasks, three per cent had sent aid to Vietnam, three per cent had provided childcare and 19 per cent had engaged in various other voluntary activities. Those involved in voluntary work tended to have more contact with agencies and the British community.
Aspects of community and security

Almost two-thirds (62 per cent) said they felt part of the local community that they lived in, not dissimilar to the 70 per cent found for non-quota refugees. This feeling varied between areas. Ninety-four per cent of the respondents living in Birmingham felt part of the community, compared to 66 per cent of those living in London, 50 per cent in Hampshire and 29 per cent in Manchester. Fielding (1987) argues that the Vietnamese have managed to establish themselves as a viable community by opening their own community centres, businesses, local advice agencies and projects, despite the resettlement problems they have had to deal with. At the same time, they have been successful in preserving their own cultural identity by arranging mother tongue language classes for their children, handicraft and art exhibitions, theatre and festivals to celebrate their heritage.

The majority (85 per cent) of the respondents said they felt safe and secure living in Britain, exactly the same proportion found for non-quota refugees. Men were more likely to feel safe and secure than women. One male respondent commented:

*My life is safe now that I am in Britain but I feel insecure in my future, especially in job prospects.*

Half of the respondents (49 per cent) said they thought people in Britain treated them differently because they had come from abroad, a similar proportion to that of non-quota refugees (43 per cent).

One-fifth (22 per cent) had been subjected to verbal abuse since coming to Britain, a slightly lower figure than for non-quota refugees (30 per cent). Vietnamese refugees who had better levels of English were more likely to have been subjected to verbal abuse than those with limited English ability. In many cases, this could be explained by the fact that those with better levels of English were able to understand what was being said to them. For instance, one respondent responded:

*I don’t actually know because I seldom go out on the street and I can’t speak English.*

One fifth (21 per cent) of the respondents had been subjected to threats. A similar figure of 18 per cent was found for non-quota refugees. Vietnamese refugees who had been subjected to threats were less likely to feel part of the community. One woman told of her experience of harassment and threats in her own neighbourhood:

*The children in the area always shout and swear at me whenever they see me. The children and adults have broken my windows so many times and they have frightened me with a hammer and a knife.*

Only two respondents said they had been subjected to physical abuse. Thirteen per cent of non-quota refugees said they had suffered in this way.
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Settlement
Over two-thirds (69 per cent) considered themselves permanently settled in Britain. Only 44 per cent of non-quota refugees felt permanently settled in the UK. As in the study of non-quota refugees, feelings of permanence of settlement were not related to whether they felt part of the British community.

Respondents who had spent shorter periods of time (less than three years) in Hong Kong camps were more likely to feel permanently settled in the UK (82 per cent) than those who had spent longer periods of time in the camps (71 per cent). Respondents who were living in London were also less likely to feel permanently settled in the UK (52 per cent) than those living in Manchester (92 per cent), Hampshire (80 per cent) or Birmingham (62 per cent).

One indicator of permanent settlement is the number of Vietnamese refugees applying for British citizenship. This has increased steadily since 1984. Crewe (1990) argues that citizenship is an identity that acts as an anchor in situating individuals in society. Refugees are unusual compared with other migrants because they apply for naturalisation early and at a high rate (Hammar, 1990). There are greater pressures on political refugees to obtain citizenship than on economic migrants. This is mainly due to the fact that refugees normally lack documentation that would provide security when travelling abroad. Table 9.4 indicates the numbers of Vietnamese applying for citizenship from 1984 to 1992. The majority of applications came from refugees who had qualified under the residency requirements or as minors under the age of 18.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Residence or relevant employment</th>
<th>Married to a British citizen*</th>
<th>Minor Children*</th>
<th>Total for year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>337</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>425</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>237</td>
<td>697</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>531</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>836</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>840</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>440</td>
<td>1304</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>651</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>290</td>
<td>965</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>1508</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>686</td>
<td>2253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>1096</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>346</td>
<td>1526</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>5323</td>
<td>279</td>
<td>2480</td>
<td>8082</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:
* includes both entitlement and discretionary grants of citizenship

Sources:
Home Office Statistical Bulletin, (21/86, Table 3a), (26/86, Table 4), (29957, Table 4), (12/88, Table 4), (9/89, Table 4), (11/90, Table 4), (6/91, Table 4), (11/92, Table 4), (16/93, Table 4).
SETTLEMENT IN THE COMMUNITY

Nevertheless, there was a substantial number of refugees who expressed their hopes of returning to Vietnam one day. One woman who had been in the UK for seven years told the interviewer:

*I don't plan on staying in Britain forever. I will return to Vietnam when there is no Communist regime in my country.*

An elderly man aged over 60 commented:

*I actually want to go back to Vietnam. I already made an application for it. I want to express my gratitude to the English government who gave me refugee status, but because of the weather, family reasons and many things, I wish to go back to Vietnam.*
10 Discussion

From 1983 to 1992, 7,978 Vietnamese refugees entered the UK. Of these, 4,798 arrived during 1983 to 1988 and 3,180 arrived during 1989 to 1992 after the start of the 2,000 Programme. On the whole, the Vietnamese population is young, with only a quarter over the age of 40. Most of the refugees were family reunion cases and joined relatives already settled in the UK. Others were rescued at sea by British vessels, or accepted on self-sufficiency or humanitarian grounds under the 2,000 Programme. The refugees were assisted during reception and resettlement by agencies such as Refugee Action, the Ockenden Venture, Refugee Council and Save the Children, as well as by private sponsors. Just over a third of Vietnamese families arriving during 1983 to 1992 went to reception centres. A higher proportion of the 2,000 programme refugees went to reception centres than those arrivals during the 1983-1988 phase. This is due to the fact that a number of reception centres were reopened to receive the refugees accepted under the programme. Over half of all Vietnamese arrivals (57 per cent) resettled or joined their relatives in London or the South-East.

Interviews with 185 Vietnamese refugees who arrived during 1983 to 1992 showed that most were married and living with relatives. Two-thirds came to be reunited with their families. The majority came from urban areas. Half had spent time in the camps in Hong Kong before they came to Britain and most of this group had spent at least three years there.

As a consequence of their flights from Vietnam, the restrictions on employment and education, and the time spent in the camps, the sample had relatively poor educational and employment backgrounds in Vietnam. Very few of the refugees had studied English in Vietnam or were able to speak any English on arrival in the UK. Half of the respondents had not obtained any type of qualification and many had not been educated at all. In addition, many of the refugees had never been employed before they came to Britain. These background characteristics have important implications for the settlement of the Vietnamese in the UK.

The research has identified several factors which are likely to affect settlement, including the impact of the camps in Hong Kong, length of time the refugee has been in the country, the age of the refugee, qualifications and education in Vietnam and the UK, and English language ability. Each of these will be discussed in turn below.

It might also be thought that the provision of organised reception facilities for the 2000 Programme would have led to better settlement for these entrants than for the intermediate arrivals. The two groups did not differ in this respect in terms of the data from this survey, but there are reasons why this comparison cannot be treated as valid. Members of the 2000 Programme had not been in the country as long as the
earlier arrivals. One would really need to study them again in a few years time to see how they had progressed over the same period of time as the others. An even greater problem, however, is presented by the fact that there were fundamental differences between the two groups in other respects as well - in terms of whether they had relatives already living in this country, their ages on arrival, whether they had or had not been selected as more or less likely to be able to settle in Britain, and so on. Only an experimental programme of randomised assignment to reception centres or to non-residential, less intensive, support would be able to test out the effect of such centres. All we can say from this survey is that it seemed likely that reception facilities did assist refugees to settle in this country, on the basis of the satisfaction expressed by those who experienced them (see Chapter 4).

Camphs in Hong Kong
Refugees who had spent time in the camps in Hong Kong were at a great disadvantage, and the longer the refugees had spent in the camps, the more disadvantaged they were. They were less likely to have studied English or to speak English on arrival in the UK. They were also less likely to rate their present level of English as conversational or fluent. Almost all of the refugees (92 per cent) who had spent three years or more in the camps were unemployed at the time of interview, and most had never had a job since they had been in the UK. Those who had spent time in the camps were also less likely to participate in educational and vocational courses, or job search and training schemes. This group not only had difficulty in learning the language and securing employment, but they were also less likely to feel permanently settled in the UK.

Older refugees
The group of refugees currently aged 40 and over suffered many resettlement problems in comparison with their younger counterparts. They were less likely to attend English classes, and those who did take language training rarely progressed beyond the beginner level. They were also more likely to have suffered from ill health affecting their employment, housing or way of life. They were less likely to be employed at the time of the interview and many of them had never worked in the UK. They were less likely to have been on educational and vocational courses or job search and training schemes. Very few of them were interested in further study or re-training.

The older refugees were more involved with their family, friends and community groups. This group was more likely to have come to the UK to be reunited with their families and to have changed addresses to be near their friends in the UK. They were also more likely to need the support of their community groups than younger refugees.

English language ability
Good English skills were associated with more successful settlement in terms of employment, training and contact with the community. A higher proportion of refugees who had taken English classes in the UK and rated their English language as
DISCUSSION

Conversational or fluent were employed at the time of interview or had been employed in the past. Indeed, the difficulty most frequently mentioned by unemployed respondents in applying for jobs in the UK was inadequate English. Those with better English skills were also more likely to have been on vocational or educational courses and government training schemes, and to want to do further training. They were more likely to have closer relations with the British community.

Educational backgrounds
Refugees who had qualifications from Vietnam were more advanced in terms of their English language ability, had superior employment records in the UK, and greater participation in educational and training opportunities. This group was more likely to have studied English in Vietnam and to be able to speak some English on arrival in the UK. Most also attended English classes in the UK. They were more likely to have been employed at the time of interview and to have been employed in the past. They were also more likely to have been on an educational or vocational course in the UK.

Education and training since entering the UK also made a difference to employment prospects. Those who had taken a course in the UK were more likely to have been employed. The third most frequent difficulty mentioned by unemployed respondents in obtaining jobs was their lack of UK qualifications.

Length of time in the UK
Over time, refugees tended to become more successful in their settlement in the UK. Those who had been in the country for longer periods of time were more likely to have adapted to the UK labour market and to have used training and educational programmes than refugees who had arrived more recently. A higher proportion of the refugees who arrived during 1983 to 1988 had completed an English course beyond beginner’s level and were also more likely to rate their English as conversational or fluent. The early arrivals were more likely to be employed at the time of the interview and to have had a job at some time since they had been in the UK. They were also more likely to have been on vocational or educational courses and government job search or training schemes. The early arrivals had also developed closer relations with the public. A higher proportion of them had joined British groups and associations and got to know British people compared with the later arrivals under the 2,000 Programme.

Comparison with non-quota refugees
In terms of their background characteristics, non-quota refugees were more likely to come from urban areas, to have better qualifications, and to have had professional jobs in their home countries than the Vietnamese. Non-quota refugees were younger, less likely to be married and more likely to live on their own.

Non-quota refugees had greater success in securing jobs in the UK compared with the Vietnamese. For both groups, those with good qualifications from their home countries, those who had been in the country longer, and those with better English
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skills were more likely to be employed. All refugees tended to rely heavily on informal methods of job-seeking. Job Clubs and Restart (job search) and Employment Training were the programmes most used by both groups. A higher proportion of non-quota refugees than of the Vietnamese used training schemes and took educational or vocational courses.

The housing situations of non-quota refugees were much worse than those of the Vietnamese. They experienced more housing mobility and homelessness. Non-quota refugees were also more reliant on the private sector and family and friends in finding their accommodation. More non-quota refugees were renting from the private sector compared to the Vietnamese, and a higher proportion owned their own homes. Almost all the Vietnamese were renting from the public sector. More non-quota refugees were living in flats, maisonettes, bedsits, shared accommodation and temporary accommodation. Non-quota refugees were more likely to be sharing their current accommodation with another household and owned fewer amenities. These differences relate to differences in the amount of organised help the two groups received on reception into Britain.

A higher proportion of Vietnamese refugees felt permanently settled in the UK, yet non-quota refugees had more contact with the wider community. They had higher rates of contact with agencies and services such as the Department of Social Security, Citizen's Advice Bureau, Law Centres, Racial Equality Councils and Refugee Council. Non-quota refugees were also more likely to join British associations and organisations. However, both groups of refugees did not seek help for health problems through statutory services, but relied on informal sources of help such as family, friends and their communities. Community groups were of great importance to all groups of refugees, and members were engaged in high rates of voluntary work for their own community.

In conclusion, one can say that the policy of using reception centres worked well in helping new arrivals to adjust to a very different culture and way of life, and help with finding accommodation was particularly valuable. The lack of such facilities for other refugees, and for those who seek asylum in this country and are allowed to remain, has made their resettlement more problematic than it has been for the Vietnamese. At the same time, the difficulties, and indeed trauma, all refugees have experienced in their past lives will always present a major obstacle to rapid adjustment. It is only with time, often a considerable time, that their lives will return to something like normality. In helping such adjustment, the major need is long-term help with the English language, especially practical experience in normal social contexts, because advances in education and employment are predicted on fluency in English. Some refugees, particularly the older ones and broken families, will also need general support for some years from community agencies, and patience and sensitivity should constantly underlie the dealings of all agencies with this vulnerable group. This may be easier with the understanding that comes from research studies like this one.
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The Research and Planning Unit (previously the Research Unit) has been publishing
tits work since 1955, and a list of reports for the last two years is provided below. A
full list of publications is available on request from the Research and Planning Unit.

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126. Developments in the use of compensation orders in magistrates’ courts
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Research Findings

(These are summaries of the main findings of research projects)

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Research Bulletin (available from the Information Section)

The Research Bulletin is published twice a year and contains short articles on recent research. Research Bulletin No. 36 was published recently and was a special issue on Prisons and prisoners.

Occasional Papers


Measurement of caseload weightings associated with the Children Act. Richard J. Gadsden and Graham J. Worsdale. 1994. (available from the RPU Information Section.)

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Books


Requests for Publications

Research and Planning Unit Papers, Research Findings, the Research and Planning Unit Programme and Research Bulletins are available on request from the Information Section, Home Office Research and Planning Unit, Room 278, 50 Queen Anne's Gate, London SW1H 9AT. Telephone: 0171 273 2084 (answering machine).

Occasional Papers can be purchased from: Home Office, Publications Unit, 50 Queen Anne's Gate, London SW1 9AT. Telephone: 0171 273 2302.

Reports published in the HOR5 series and RPU books are available from HMSO, who will advise as to prices, at the following address: HMSO Publications Centre, PO Box 276, London SW8 5DT. Telephone orders: 0171 873 9090. General enquiries: 0171 873 0011. Fax orders: 0171 873 8200.
The last Home Office study of Vietnamese refugees in Britain covered arrivals up until 1982. This report covers those who arrived since then, up to 1992. It is largely based on personal interviews with Vietnamese refugees themselves. Their lives are compared with those of people of other nationalities who are accepted as refugees or allowed to remain in this country for humanitarian reasons. The report also shows how experiences have differed between those who spent several years in camps in Hong Kong, and those who did not, an important feature affecting the success of settlement. Other important features were understanding of English, previous qualifications, age on arrival and whether or not they attended reception centres in this country.