

Indicators of Integration

final report

Patterns of Crime

Crime Reduction

Policing and Organised Crime

Criminal Justice System

Drugs and Alcohol

Offenders

Corrections

Immigration and Asylum

Social Cohesion and Civil Renewal

Economic Analysis and Modelling

The Research, Development and Statistics Directorate exists to improve policy making, decision taking and practice in support of the Home Office purpose and aims, to provide the public and Parliament with information necessary for informed debate and to publish information for future use.

Home Office Development and Practice Reports are produced by the Research, Development and Statistics Directorate.

For further copies contact:
Communication Development Unit
Room 264,
Home Office,
50 Queen Anne's Gate, London
SW1H 9AT.

Tel: 020 7273 2084
Fax: 020 7222 0211
E-mail: publications.rds@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

Visit our website at <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds>

© Crown copyright 2004
ISSN 1477 3120
ISBN 1 84473 456 0

Indicators of Integration: final report

Alastair Ager and Alison Strang
Queen Margaret University College, Edinburgh

Summary

The Indicators of Integration study

This report presents the final outputs of the *'Indicators of Integration'* study which has been undertaken by Queen Margaret University College, Edinburgh and commissioned by the Home Office.

The overall aims of this study have been threefold;

- Firstly, to investigate different understandings of 'integration' as a concept;
- secondly, on the basis of this work, to establish a framework for a common understanding of 'integration' that can be used by those working in the field of refugee integration in the UK; and
- thirdly, to design the framework for use by local projects and policy makers to assist them with the planning and evaluation of services for refugees.

By commissioning this work the Home Office has aimed to encourage a coherent understanding and approach to refugee integration work across the UK. It has also aimed to help local projects to plan and evaluate their services through the use of the framework, and to measure the progress of their clients towards integration.

The main output from the study is the *Indicators of Integration* framework that is presented in full in Appendix A. The framework divides the concept of refugee integration into ten distinct but interrelated 'domains' and, under each domain, suggests a series of indicators against which progress towards integration might be assessed.

This report

The aim of this report is to explain the reasoning behind the *Indicators of Integration* study, to introduce the framework and how it was derived, and to suggest ways in which the framework might be useful to both policy makers and practitioners working in the field of refugee integration.

The report introduces the framework through the following three sections;

- The first section explains what the framework is and how it is structured;
- The second section suggests ways in which the framework might be used; and
- The third section presents background to the framework and briefly describes the different pieces of work that have contributed to it (further reports are available on each of these component studies).

Home Office Development and Practice Reports draw out from research the messages for practice development, implementation and operation. They are intended as guidance for practitioners in specific fields. The recommendations explain how and why changes could be made, based on the findings from research, which would lead to better practice.

What is the Indicators of Integration framework?

The aims of the framework

The *Indicators of Integration* study was commissioned by the Home Office in 2002. It was initially designed to support the wider evaluation of the Challenge Fund and European Refugee Fund (ERF), both of which fund projects that support the integration of refugees into the UK, in line with the policy direction specified within the Home Office report 'Full and Equal Citizens' (2001).

The initial impetus for the study came from the fact that whilst 'Full and Equal Citizens' indicated a number of areas where integration is to be encouraged, it did not offer a description or definition of the term. The *Indicators of Integration* study was therefore commissioned to improve understanding of what refugee integration actually means in the contemporary UK context, and to guide the Home Office's future work in this area

The aims of this study have therefore been threefold:

- **Firstly**, to investigate different understandings of 'integration' as a concept;
- **Secondly**, on the basis of this work, to establish a framework for a common understanding of 'integration' that can be used by those working in the field of refugee integration in the UK; and
- **Thirdly**, to design the framework for use by local projects and policy makers to assist them with the planning and evaluation of services for refugees.

The objective of the study has not been to *define* integration as such (although a preliminary definition is offered in this report). Rather it has been to use available literature, qualitative interviews and others sources of data to identify the key factors that appear to contribute to the process of integration for refugees in the UK. Following this, the study has also aimed to suggest a set of indicators that could be used to assess how far refugee integration for both individuals and communities has been achieved.

The study does not seek to impose a uniform measure of integration for use in all settings. Instead, it is hoped that the framework will be employed flexibly, where it is useful, as a resource for joint working and planning. For instance, some projects may find that only certain domains are directly relevant to the focus of their work with refugee clients and the communities in which they have settled. Further, within these domains, only some of the suggested indicators may be appropriate for use, given a project's goals. Users of the framework should also feel free to identify additional indicators within selected domains, where these reflect specific project objectives.

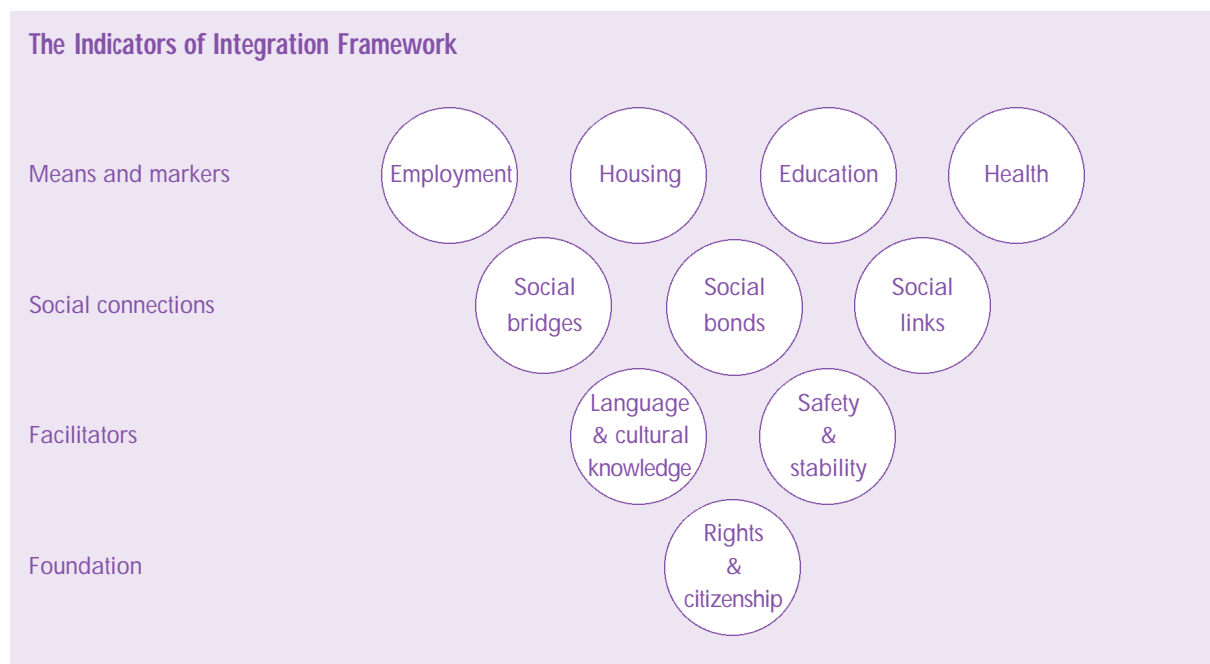
Such flexibility is important for the framework to prove a practical and useful tool, which can evolve over time and through use. However, the structure of the framework does provide a coherent basis for thinking about integration issues, based upon a rigorous programme of research. As such, its greatest use will be in providing a sound basis for dialogue around issues of integration policy and practice. For such dialogue to happen, clearly the framework needs to be used in a consistent manner. Although the framework can be used flexibly, therefore, those using it are encouraged to adopt its basic structure and suggested indicators wherever appropriate.

Finally, it should be stressed that, in producing this document, neither the authors nor the Home Office expect to see small refugee-focused projects investing inappropriately large amounts of time and resources in collecting data through surveys or conducting large-scale qualitative work. For local projects, information collection will inevitably be small-scale and based, wherever possible, on existing sources of information. The authors expect the framework to be as useful as a guide to the long term planning of projects as it is in suggesting ways in which projects can assess the impact of their work.

The basic structure of the framework

The framework is structured around ten key domains that the evidence has been gathered suggests are of central importance to the integration of refugees. Within each of these ten domains a number – usually around 10 – indicators are suggested as a means of assessing integration with respect to that specific domain. The method by which these domains and indicators were identified is detailed in the third section of this report.

The ten domains are grouped under four headings, as shown in the chart below.



The following sections describe each of the four headings and the domains within them, and explain why the framework is structured in this way.

Markers and means

There are four domains within the framework under the heading “markers and means”: Employment, Housing, Education and Health. Grouped together, these domains represent major areas of attainment that are widely recognised as critical factors in the integration process.

The selection of the four domains under this heading is based – in part – upon a preliminary review of potential indicators that was undertaken as the first part of the *Indicators of Integration* study (these are discussed in more detail in the third section of the report). Of particular importance in the review of indicators were the categories of integration indicator adopted by the Council of Europe (1997) that highlighted important areas of public activity where integration could be assessed (employment, education etc.). Subsequent to the preliminary review of potential indicators, it was found that the themes of employment, housing, education and health, in particular, consistently emerged through all phases of the current study. Therefore, it was concluded that it was essential that these represented distinct domains within the final *Indicators of Integration* framework.

Achievement in each of these four domains should not be seen purely as an ‘outcome’ of integration, they also clearly serve as ‘means’ to that end as well. Therefore the four domains of ‘Employment’, ‘Housing’, ‘Education’ and ‘Health’ are defined within the framework in recognition of the importance of attainment in these areas; not only to demonstrate progress towards integration, but also to support achievement in other areas.

In short, these domains are ‘markers’; because success in these domains is an indication of positive integration outcomes, and ‘means’ because success in these domains is likely to assist the wider integration process.

Social connections

There are three domains within the framework under the heading “social connections”: ‘social bridges’, ‘social bonds’ and ‘social links’. Taken together they stress the importance of relationships to the understanding of the integration process.

Whilst the four domains outlined above under “markers and means” can be thought of as the ‘public face’ of integration, they do not fully explain what integration is about for people as they experience it in their lives.

Evidence for this comes from each of the strands of this study which all pointed to the additional importance of relationships between people, as key to both the definition and achievement of integration.

Guided by this finding, the authors have – in the research leading up to the final framework looked at the different forms of social relationship that are important to integration. In doing so they have used language and literature related to the concept of social capital to distinguish between three different forms of social connection or relationship (see Woolcock, 1998).

These are as follows;

1. Social bonds (connections within a community defined by, for example, ethnic, national or religious identity);
2. Social bridges (with members of other communities); and
3. Social links (with institutions, including local and central government services).

The usefulness of the distinction between these three areas has been supported throughout the work that has led to the development of the framework, in particular the qualitative research in refugee and non-refugee communities (which are discussed in more detail in the third section of this report)

Facilitators

There are two domains within the framework under the heading “facilitators”: ‘language and cultural knowledge’ and ‘safety and stability’. These represent key facilitating factors for the process of integration.

All of the work that has contributed to the development of the framework has identified key areas of cultural competence that are necessary for people to effectively integrate into the wider community. Principle among such competencies is that of ‘English Language’. This was initially proposed as a domain in its own right, but qualitative interviews within refugee-impacted communities consistently stressed the importance of a broader cultural knowledge in enabling integration processes and outcomes. This included both refugees’ knowledge of national and local procedures, customs and facilities, but also non-refugees’ knowledge of the circumstances and culture of refugees. Such issues are integrated within the domain of ‘Language and Cultural Knowledge’ (ensuring that both the reciprocal nature of cultural understanding and the potential relevance of non-English language – e.g Gaelic – is considered).

Experiences relating to racial harassment and, more generally, fear of crime were initially reflected across different domains of the framework. However, feedback during the verification phase suggested that such issues – prominent within the qualitative fieldwork – risked being given insufficient prominence. A discrete domain of ‘Safety and Security’ was therefore added to the framework. This domain also allowed the issue of continuity and a sense of permanence (seen as an important factor in helping people to begin establishing relationships, and through this to wider integration) to be clearly located within the framework.

Foundation

There is one domain within the framework under the heading “Foundation”: ‘rights and citizenship’. This represents the basis upon which expectations and obligations for the process of integration are established.

The analysis of definitions of integration undertaken as the second part of the *Indicators of Integration* study (see below) identified how ideas of citizenship and nationhood – and thus rights – impacted fundamentally on what ‘counts’ as integration. The qualitative research which followed (see below in the third section of this report) further highlighted how both the attitudes of non-refugees towards refugees, and refugees towards the process of integration itself, was similarly influenced by perceptions of rights and entitlements.

It was concluded from this, that if the indicator framework was to provide a comprehensive and contextual analysis of integration, it is important that such issues are captured. Therefore a domain of ‘Rights and Citizenship’ – with clear links to current discussions around policy developments in the area of citizenship education for refugees and other migrants – is included as the tenth and final domain.

The relationship between domains

In its current form the integration framework does not seek to identify the many relationships between domains, nor does it attempt to suggest a clear ‘process’ of integration. This is because there are such complex inter-linkages between all of the proposed domains that actions influencing any of the domains have potential impacts on all the others. It is

particularly important to stress that the way the domains are presented should not be taken to suggest a 'hierarchy'. It is therefore not proposed that any domain is more important than any other, or that integration should happen in a particular order (i.e. that you achieve employment first, then greater social bonds).

However, in using the framework it might be helpful to consider the wide variety of 'pathways' linking the domains. It is possible to 'read' the framework from the bottom to the top, for instance, considering how rights enable access to services which assist in the acquisition of cultural awareness and knowledge, which then supports the development of social capital and, in turn, achievement in such areas as employment and education. However, as argued above, such an understanding should not be taken to suggest a 'causal' model of integration, this is because 'outcomes' in domains such as employment can lead to further benefits in other areas across the framework such as language competence and social connections.

The indicators

For each domain around ten indicators have been selected from all of those that were potentially relevant. These indicators can be used as guidance on the sorts of issues that need to be considered, they can also be used as measures against which progress towards integration can be assessed; either at an individual, or at a group level, and either quantitatively or qualitatively

Policy and practice-level indicators

The indicators are split into two levels. This reflects the fact that, from the outset, the objective for presenting *Indicators of Integration* framework was to produce something of value at both the **policy** and **practice** levels. As such the aims of the framework have been:

- at the policy level, the framework has been designed to encourage a general understanding of what integration is, how it can be achieved and how progress can be measured; and
- at the practice level, it aims to help with the planning and delivery of services.

This dual emphasis has represented a tension in presenting appropriate indicators for each of the domains. This is that, whilst wanting to maintain a consistent picture of integration of relevance to everyone, policy level indicators that are appropriate and available for summarising regional or national trends in integration may be very different from those that are relevant for assessing the local outcomes for a particular project.

To resolve this, the same ten-domain structure has been adopted for both the policy and practice level, and sets of indicators suggested for each level. This maintains the structure of the core issues relevant to integration (i.e. the ten domains), whilst enabling the framework to be used at both levels.

Core indicators

Within each domain, two **core indicators** have been specified at the policy level. These indicators are those that were felt are particularly key to measuring integration. Organisations looking to focus explicitly on a limited selection of indicators are particularly encouraged to focus on these as they are likely to provide a useful basis for comparison.

The definition of integration implicit in the framework

Finally, in this section of the report it is appropriate to show how the framework (as it is outlined above) moves tentatively towards a definition of this elusive term. Although it was not the purpose of this *Indicators of Integration* study to provide this, the definition of integration implicit within the framework is essentially as stated below.

An individual or group is integrated within a society when they:

- *achieve public outcomes within employment, housing, education, health etc. which are equivalent to those achieved within the wider host communities;*
- *are socially connected with members of a (national, ethnic, cultural, religious or other) community with which they identify, with members of other communities and with relevant services and functions of the state; and*
- *have sufficient linguistic competence and cultural knowledge, and a sufficient sense of security and stability, to confidently engage in that society in a manner consistent with shared notions of nationhood and citizenship.*

Some key ideas in the definition clarified

The above definition is a very 'technical' statement, and is not intended as a definition that would be routinely used by organisations. However, it may be worth clarifying some of the ideas used in it. Achievements in terms of housing, employment etc. are referred to as 'public outcomes' because these are the outward signs of integration that have frequently been the focus of measures of 'integration'. The social connections that support such achievement reflect – as discussed above – not just relationships initiated by refugees themselves, but wider relationships within local communities. The 'two-way' process of integration emphasises that these social connections potentially involve all members of local communities. Finally, in the UK it is clear that there is much current debate regarding the idea of 'shared notions of nationhood and citizenship'. There may not presently be clear agreement on such ideas, but the fact remains that views on what it is to be an active citizen within the UK inevitably shape expectations of what it is to be 'integrated' within the country.

The view of 'integration' suggested by the definition may represent a degree of involvement not achieved by many people within the UK, regardless of their immigration status. Is this 'standard' set by the definition then too high? The work on development of the *Indicators of Integration* framework suggests that there is sufficient consensus on the character of an integrated community – and the desirability of this – to use the definition to structure discussions of advancing local and national integration. The definition essentially suggests a goal to work towards.

How can the indicators of integration framework be used?

Principles

Firstly, in this section it is worth outlining a number of principles that have underlined the design of the framework and which it is hoped will enable it to be used effectively.

Ease of use

The *Indicators of Integration* framework seeks to help practitioners and policy-makers in the understanding and measurement of a complex concept – integration. Such complexity has been addressed in a rigorous manner through all the work that has contributed to the development of the framework (see the third section of this report), but the aim has been an 'end-product' that is easy to use. The objective has been to define a framework that simplifies understanding of integration, without distorting key meanings and considerations.

Flexibility

While seeking to address the concept of integration in a comprehensive manner, it is clear that the focus and circumstances of users of the framework will be very varied. The framework has therefore been designed with a view that users may choose to focus only on specific integration domains or, within a domain, on specific indicators. Such flexibility of use occurs, however, within the unifying structure of the overall framework.

Availability of suitable data

The selection of indicators within a domain partly reflected the importance of each specific issue to the achievement of integration. However, the accessibility of data relevant to an indicator was also a vital consideration in their selection. To be a useful framework users – whether at policy level or practice level – need to be able to identify means of collecting data in support of proposed indicators. A stakeholder discussion arranged by the Home Office in January 2003 to review potential indicators provided a useful basis for selection of those indicators within the framework. However, given that a potential role of the framework is to identify potentially important indicators for which data are currently not available, the ready availability of existing data sources was not a pre-requirement for including a particular indicator. The identification of indicators which capture important features of the processes of integration, but for which current procedures and practices do not support collection of relevant data, may usefully encourage changes in data collection by agencies and organisations. Within each domain relevant to their work, however, most agencies should readily find indicators for which they already have (or with some adjustment could have) suitable data.

It is important to recognise that at a project level it is likely that practitioners will need to be selective regarding the domains they choose to focus on, and – within those domains – which indicators are focused upon. When making such choices, the availability of comparison data (from other projects, other areas or from the general population) may be an important factor.

Availability of guidance

Although the *Indicators of Integration* framework has been designed for ease of use, for some indicators it will be a difficult task to collect valid and reliable data. The Home Office is committed to producing further documentation in support of the framework to assist in its use. This will potentially include guidance on existing sources of data collected through governmental surveys, and means of qualitative data collection at local levels. This guidance will be aimed to be of assistance to refugee community organisations and other community-based organisations, as well as statutory agencies, playing a key role in promoting local integration.

Areas of application

The authors expect that the main areas of use for the framework will be as follows:

Policy review

As an 'operational' definition of integration, the framework provides a basis for policy review at a national or regional level. The framework has already been used by the Home Office, for example, in the formulation of revised policy subsequent to 'Full and Equal Citizens'. Some sub-groups of the National Refugee Integration Forum have begun to use the framework as a basis for reflecting on relevant forward agendas. The Scottish Refugee Council is interested in using the framework as a basis for reviewing the coverage of its programme and services in Scotland.

Helping with local consultations

The domain structure of the framework offers similar potential at a local level for structuring consultations on areas of achievement and concern. In the course of the verification phase, a number of agencies have indicated the potential of the framework to structure stakeholder consultation and shared action planning.

A typical local project might, for example, as part of its evaluation procedures, use the framework to specify in which of the domains it is broadly working and then select specific indicators to focus on and target when working with its clients. The authors expect that this process will be particularly helpful in encouraging projects to consider the outcomes or impact of work with refugees, and through this help to quantify this impact and compare it to other similar projects with the same aims.

Service monitoring and evaluation

Providing a framework of domains – and potential indicators – enables services to reflect on their goals and purposes. It also helps identify indicators to monitor service effectiveness and evaluate beneficiary and/or community impact. In such circumstances the framework is not intended to be prescriptive, but an enabling resource to foster awareness of relevant issues and potential means of measuring progress. There is also significant potential for the framework to be used to highlight areas where qualitative evaluations could provide valuable insights in to local processes of integration. The draft framework has been used in this manner to assist in the development of an evaluation of an employment and counselling project for refugees in the Midlands.

Benchmarking

As well as using the *Indicators of Integration* framework as a tool to define and measure local needs and achievement, by contributing towards a common understanding of integration there is potential for the framework to help organisations compare their work across settings.

For example, with a consistent understanding of the measures associated with 'employment' success, policy-makers and practitioners may be able to compare what they have achieved in terms of outcomes for refugees with the achievements of other organisations, and refine their services as a result. Similarly, projects can also use the framework as a way of seeing how the outcomes for their clients compare with those of other populations (including local communities or the general population). The framework has been designed with these uses in mind, so that – as noted elsewhere in this report – many of the indicators have been included because of their comparability with other data-sets.

Despite the potential for benchmarking that the framework offers, projects will need to be cautious in two ways.

1. The authors would not encourage projects to focus on work that directly contributes to successes on specific indicators at the expense of other work, which might be useful but may not directly lead to achievement of a measurable indicator. This is sometimes called 'indicator chasing' and both the authors and the Home Office are keen to ensure that the indicators presented here do not drive the work of local projects to too great an extent. For example, the authors would not encourage projects to choose to focus exclusively upon a small number of easily measurable indicators as this could bias service delivery away from other important areas of work.
2. When seeking to make comparisons with integration outcomes for other groups or in other settings, great care needs to be taken in ensuring that there is an appropriate basis for comparison. General population rates of employment, educational attainment etc. may make appropriate long-term goals, but comparison to more local outcomes regarding these issues may make a more suitable initial 'benchmark'. Also, if the refugee population being served by a project is, for example, very much younger than the wider population, the influence of factors of age on such issues as income level or social connection needs to be taken into consideration. Refugee populations may vary on many such factors from the wider population in an area. Refugees frequently include a high proportion of people with a professional background; if this is the case, expectations regarding level of employment may appropriately be higher than in the wider population. The experiences of flight put refugees at a higher risk of certain mental health problems; higher rates of accessing mental health services than in the general population would be expected in such circumstances. As a result of these sorts of complexities, in many settings perhaps the most important 'benchmark' will be baseline data against which a project can demonstrate impact and improvement over time for refugees themselves.

Measuring integration and community cohesion in other contexts

The way the *Indicators of Integration* framework was developed placed the integration of refugees as its central concern, and indicators have been selected to reflect this. However, the approach adopted encourages a focus on the communities in which refugees are settling. The framework is therefore of potential relevance to wider issues of community cohesion. In addition, the framework could – with modification – be used to consider the experience of asylum seekers, of economic migrants, and of other groups. In this manner, for example, the framework has already been used to inform discussion amongst national bodies about the core domains of a measure of migrant integration in Europe.

Guiding governmental survey strategy

There is clear potential for using the framework as a basis for increasing coherence in data collection on issues relevant to integration. A number of indicators were chosen because of their adoption in existing surveys (such as the Home Office Citizenship Survey) and there is the potential to bring together a number of initiatives in this area, to develop comprehensive data-sets on issues of settlement, integration and community cohesion. A number of government departments have already reviewed the indicator framework, and reflected on those issues for which data is (and is not) routinely collected.

How was the indicators of integration framework developed?

The development of the *Indicators of Integration* framework involved two tasks:

- defining the core domains that are relevant to understanding integration; and
- identifying indicators to assess attainment within each of these domains.

This section summarises the six distinct phases through which these tasks were addressed, leading to the final indicators framework that is presented in this report.

Other reports are available giving more detail of the development process. These include reports of an analysis of differing understandings of the term integration (Ager *et al.*, 2002), a review of potential indicators for use within evaluation studies (Ager and Eyber, 2002) and an analysis of factors influencing the local experience of integration in London and Glasgow (Strang *et al.* 2003).

Review of potential indicators

This first phase of the project involved a review of all indicators that had been used, in other work, or had potential for use in assessment of integration processes and outcomes. This review identified approaching 200 indicators of potential relevance.

For the purposes of the review, indicators were grouped around the categories adopted for the Council of Europe (1998) report 'Measurements and *Indicators of Integration*'. This distinguished between four key dimensions of integration – economic, social, cultural and political.

However, in the course of listing potential indicators under these four categories – and sub categories within them – the ambiguity and potential overlap of the terms became apparent. These four categories usefully served to highlight the broad range of issues that may be meaningfully related to integration, but they did not appear to provide a basis for a conceptually clear framework. Therefore, upon the completion of this phase, it was clear that further work was required before a usable integration framework could be established.

Conceptual analysis of integration

The review of existing definitions of the concept of integration was the second phase of the *Indicators of Integration* study. This was used to identify a more conceptually meaningful basis from which to understand the concept of integration than that which was available from the straightforward listing of indicators, undertaken in the first part of the study.

The conceptual analysis began by considering the major review of integration research conducted on behalf of the Home Office which had concluded that:

There is no single, generally accepted definition, theory or model of immigrant and refugee integration. The concept continues to be controversial and hotly debated (Castles et al. 2001)

With Robinson further noting:

Integration is a chaotic concept: a word used by many but understood differently by most (Robinson, 1998)

Such statements made it clear that no consensus on the meaning and application of the concept was currently available.

Following this, over 40 formal definitions of the term and related concepts were reviewed along with the implicit definitions offered by refugees and other relevant stakeholders, and it was concluded that, whilst no single definition would suffice for the authors' purposes, a number of discrete themes did consistently recur. These themes included:

- the identification of a series of 'public outcomes' of integration (very much reflecting the key themes of 'Full and Equal Citizens');
- consideration of the importance of participation and relationships (across a range of settings); and
- acknowledgement of the importance of notions of citizenship in shaping local and national expectations regarding 'integration'.

This analysis led to the proposal of a working definition of integration:

An individual or group is integrated within a society when they:

achieve public outcomes within employment, housing, education, health etc. which are equivalent to those achieved within the wider host communities, and

are in active relationship with members of their ethnic or national community, wider host communities and relevant services and functions of the state, in a manner consistent with shared notions of nationhood and citizenship in that society.

The conceptual analysis of definitions also helped to identify broad domains that could be used to structure the integration framework in a clearer manner than offered by the Council of Europe categorisation of indicators.

Qualitative study of the experience of integration

A framework solely based upon the conceptual analysis outlined above may have been clear, but to have validity it also needed to bear some relationship to understandings and perceptions of integration at a local level. If refugees themselves – and the communities in which they have settled – did not recognise the issues identified by the framework as important and meaningful, the framework would have little value as a planning and evaluation framework for people working

locally on integration. This conclusion led to the next stage of the study, which involved conducting primary qualitative research in communities in which refugees have settled.

The qualitative research was conducted in communities in London and Glasgow and is reported on more fully in Strang *et al.* (2003). It provided an opportunity to address the issues relating to integration with the people who were experiencing the process directly. In particular, it enabled the identification of key issues influencing the perceptions of both refugees and non-refugees regarding local integration.

Major themes emerging from this phase of the research concerned the complex nature of local communities, including difficulties in the clear definition of refugee and 'host' communities, and the confusion between the terms 'refugee' and 'asylum seeker' common amongst non-refugees. Considerable overlap was apparent between understandings of integration emerging from interviews with refugees and non-refugees. In particular, in thinking about integration, both groups stressed the importance of quality inter-relationships between people based on feelings, equal rights and respect. Key factors that were seen to aid or impede integration were language skills, the sharing of cultural understanding, a sense of security and the experience or expectation of continuity in people's life arrangements (in particular housing).

A number of the findings from this research reinforced the themes identified by the earlier conceptual review (e.g. the importance of attainment in such areas as employment and housing), others extended these (e.g. regarding perception of rights and non-discrimination). It was also found that local definitions of integration tended to emphasise, in particular, the importance of social relationships. This included not only the role of positive relationships – 'belonging and feeling part of an entity...having friends' – but also the absence of negative relationships – 'lack of trouble' and 'toleration'.

Linkage of variables in the cross-sectional survey

A cross-sectional survey of refugees conducted as part of the wider evaluation of Challenge Fund and ERF-funded projects was conducted in 2003/2004 by MORI and provided an additional source of data for the *Indicators of Integration* study (see Peckham *et al.* 2004). Although a number of the questions in the survey addressed experiences of receiving a particular service from a project, others addressed broader experiences of life as a refugee in the UK. With items covering a wide range of topics (including housing, health, employment, language, community relations, subjective well-being etc.), the survey provided the opportunity to conduct statistical analysis to identify potential 'linkage' between items. Analysis of this 'linkage' provided a further potential basis for the definition of discrete domains of experience important to integration.

Analysis of this dataset used the technique of multi-dimensional scaling to identify the factors most closely linked with refugees feeling positive about their quality of life. This analysis reinforced trends identified by the qualitative work about the importance of the friendliness and welcome of local people, and of housing conditions, on subjective well-being. Experience of health problems and of harassment and intimidation was amongst the things linked with negative judgements of life quality. 'Friendliness of local people' and 'involvement with the local community' were NOT closely associated, with the former far more influential on reported quality of life. This suggests that for refugees a secure and friendly neighbourhood is different from – and far more important in supporting integration – than social participation with members of that neighbourhood. It was concluded that this distinction between basic 'friendliness' and more involved relationships needed to be reflected in the indicator framework.

The selection of indicators

At the conclusion of the statistical analysis of the refugee survey dataset – and with the influence of all the preceding phases of the study – the ten-domain structure for the framework was broadly established. This led to the next stage which involved the selection of indicators under each of the ten domains.

When selecting the indicators from each domain there have been four considerations:

1. **Comprehensiveness:** selecting indicators that represented all the important sub-issues within each domain, without making the list of indicators too long.
2. **Flexibility:** enabling users of the framework to choose the indicators that reflect their specific local focus and context.
3. **Comparability:** by using well established indicators the authors aimed to provide opportunities for benchmarking and the collection of coherent datasets
4. **Feasibility:** the specification of indicators for which – wherever possible – data is readily available. Where such existing data is not readily available, it should be at least feasible for such data to be collected.

In the authors view, the final set of indicators within each domain represents the most effective balance between these considerations, given the need also for the framework to be concise and practicable for use. It is not an exhaustive list of indicators, and users may identify additional indicators which better reflect the specific needs of their projects or programmes. In these instances, however, the authors invite users to adopt their own specific indicators whilst continuing to follow the general approach outlined by the *Indicators of Integration* work, thereby supporting potential comparability with other organisations.

Consultation and verification

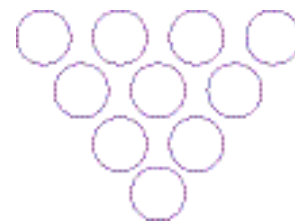
The final verification phase of the study involved consultation with a wide range of potential users of the resultant framework, at both the level of local practice and wider policy. The focus of the verification phase was the meaningfulness and utility of the framework for potential users.

The principal means of verification was the presentation of the framework at major verification seminars: one in Islington, one in Pollokshaws (the two sites of the qualitative fieldwork phases) and one in Croydon, to an extensive list of Home Office invitees (across the governmental, voluntary and academic sectors). At each seminar the rationale, structure and detail of the *Indicators of Integration* framework was first presented, followed by structured activities and discussion. Seminars concluded with appraisal of the framework in terms of its potential value to participants' work in promoting the integration of refugees.

These verification seminars were supplemented by seeking reaction to the framework by email from a wide range of additional stakeholders. These stakeholders were consulted principally on the basis that their work involved the tracking of relevant indicators and/or knowledge of pre-existing data-sets. In such cases feedback was sought regarding the selection of proposed indicators within the particular domains in which they had specialist interest and expertise, although wider comments on the value of the framework were also welcomed.

The overwhelming response of those consulted during the verification period was welcoming of the framework, and supportive of its approach to the operational definition of the concept of integration. Comments on the wording and selection of specific indicators were used in a final revision of the proposed framework. Many comments were addressed at means of supporting use of the framework and have been incorporated into this report.

Indicators of refugee integration: an indicator framework



Use of the framework

For Projects and Services

The Iol framework is intended for use in local **planning** and **evaluation**. In terms of **planning** it seeks to help clarify those aspects of integration that a project or service is aiming to impact. In terms of **evaluation** it provides a basis for then identifying if such targeted impacts have occurred.

For policy makers

The Iol framework supports similar processes at a wider policy level. It may be used as a framework to structure **policy development** in terms of potential measures to support integration. It may then be used as a tool to support **policy review**, noting areas of progress and areas of continuing need.

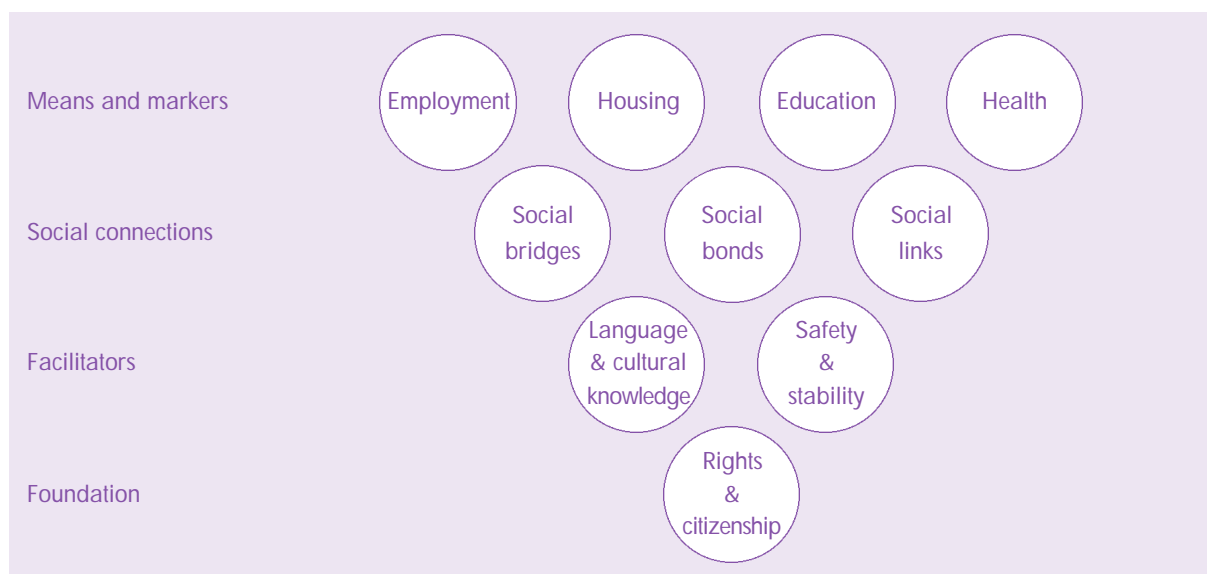
Structure of the framework

Integration is a term for which it is difficult to find a definition with which everyone agrees. This framework identifies ten core **domains**, each of which considers one aspect of integration. These domains were identified after both extensive study of attempts to define integration and discussions with refugees and other members of refugee-impacted communities. The domains link with each other in many different ways – the way they are presented does **not** seek to suggest a **hierarchy** of their relative importance.

Within each domain a series of potential **indicators** is identified. These provide alternative means of assessing the level of integration relevant to that specific domain. Indicators may be meaningful in their own right, or may need to be interpreted with respect to general population data. **Different** indicators are proposed for the levels of **policy** and of **practice**. Both at a policy and practice level it is unlikely that *all* indicators listed will be relevant or feasible as measures. At a policy level, however, **core indicators** are recommended for general use, as a means to develop the potential for comparison across settings and across time. All indicators need to be interpreted with care, taking into consideration context and the relevance of potential comparisons.

Framework overview

The framework consists of ten domains, grouped by four themes.

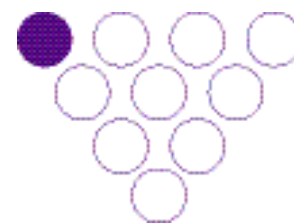


Means and markers are key areas for the participation of refugees in the life of communities. They serve as markers of integration in so far as they show evidence of achieving or accessing things that are valued within the community. They also serve as means to those ends, in that they will often help achieve other things relevant to integration.

Social connection involves the different social relationships and networks that help towards integration. Those connections may be with people who share your own experiences and values through ethnicity, religion or country of origin. These connections are defined as **bonds** within communities. Connections with other groups are seen as **bridges** between communities. Finally, connections that help to access services and be fully involved as a citizen are defined as **links** to services and government. All serve to connect an individual or group into the wider community.

Facilitators are the key skills, knowledge and circumstances that help people to be active, engaged and secure within communities.

Foundation refers to the principles that define what you have a right to expect from the state and from other members of your communities and what is expected of you. These principles include the rights that are given to individuals, and the expectations and obligations of citizenship.



Employment

Employment provides a mechanism for income generation and economic advancement and, as such, is generally considered by both policy analysts and refugees themselves as a key factor supporting integration. Jobs are also valuable in (re)establishing valued social roles, developing language and broader cultural competence and establishing social connections.

Practice level

- Uptake of services by refugee clients of, JobCentrePlus, vocational training programmes, local enterprise company business start-up initiatives, professional accreditation programmes etc.
- Number of local employers employing one or more people with refugee status
- Mean length of time before securing employment after being granted refugee status
- Rates of under-employment (number of refugees with professional and university qualification holding manual employment)
- Reported satisfaction with employment amongst refugees

Potential sources of such data: project records; evaluation surveys; skills surveys; employment service records; Labour Force Survey; Regional Development Agency data.

Policy level

Core indicators:

- Employment and unemployment rates of refugees (compared with rates amongst the general population)
- Average annual earnings and/or income for refugees and/or refugee households

Other indicators:

- Rates of under-employment (number of refugees with professional and university qualification holding manual employment)
- Rates of refugee self-employment

Potential sources of such data: DWP records; HO longitudinal survey; Regional Development Agency data; Labour Force Survey; Home Office Citizenship Survey.



Housing

Housing structures much of refugees' experience of integration. Housing conditions impact a community's sense of security and stability, opportunities for social connection, and access to healthcare, education and employment.

Practice level

- Proportion of refugees living in owner-occupier and secure tenancy (or assured tenancy) conditions (compared with general population)
- Proportion of refugees living in most deprived ten per cent local authority wards (using 'Index of Multiple Deprivation' definition)
- Reported satisfaction with housing conditions
- Number of homeless refugees

Potential sources of such data: project and programme records; local surveys; housing association records; qualitative interviews; Home Office Citizenship Survey; Survey of English Housing

Policy level

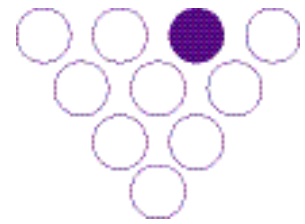
Core indicators:

- Proportion of refugees living in owner-occupier and secure tenancy (or assured tenancy) conditions (compared with general population)
- Proportion of refugees resident in housing areas targeted for renewal and support (e.g. SIPs)

Other indicators:

- Housing occupation/overcrowding for refugee households (compared with general population and allowing for household size)

Potential sources of such data: ODPM records; local surveys; housing association records; Home Office Citizenship Survey; Survey of English Housing.



Education

Access to – and progress within – the education system serves as a significant marker of integration, and also as a major means towards this goal . Education creates significant opportunities for employment, for wider social connection and for language learning.

Practice level

- The percentage of children from refugee families achieving:
 - specified key stages (or equivalent) at primary level
 - five or more GCSEs/Standard Grades at A*-C
 - two or more 'A' level or Advanced Higher passes
 - admission to university
- Number of refugees completing vocational qualification (e.g. NVQs/SVQs)
- Number of children of refugee parents participating in pre-school education
- Proportion of refugee children participating in lunchtime and 'after school' clubs (compared with general population)
- Refugee children's reported satisfaction with, and experience of, school
- The extent to which individual school rolls reflect distribution of children by ethnicity (and/or refugee status) in their catchment area/LEA admissions area

Potential sources of such data: school reports; HMI Inspectorate reports; LEA records; Pupil Level Annual Schools Census; UCAS; university admissions records; SEN register.

Policy level

Core indicators:

- The percentage of children from refugee families achieving:
 - specified key stages (or equivalent) at primary level
 - five or more GCSEs/Standard Grades at A*-C
 - two or more 'A' level or Advanced Higher passes
 - admission to university
- Number of refugees completing vocational qualification (e.g. NVQs/SVQs)

Potential sources of such data: school reports; HMI Inspectorate reports; LEA records; Pupil Level Annual School Census; UCAS; university admissions records.



Health

The key issues here are equity of access to health services and responsiveness of such services to the specific needs of refugee populations. Good health enables greater social participation and engagement in employment and education activities.

Practice level

- Proportion of refugees registered with General Practitioner (compared with general population)
- Utilisation rates of specialised services (e.g. antenatal care, mental health services, chiropody services, NHD Direct etc.) by refugees (compared with general population)
- Refugees reported satisfaction with service provision
- Refugee involvement in Patient Advisory & Liaison Services and similar initiatives
- Patient information available in culturally-appropriate form regarding service entitlements, provision and relevant health risks

Potential sources of such data: PCT/LHCC and practice records; local 'patient focus' surveys; project records

Policy Level

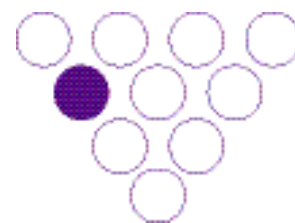
Core indicators:

- Morbidity and mortality rates compared with general population
- Immunisation, antenatal care and cervical and breast screening (coverage compared with general population)

Other indicators:

- The number of refugee doctors and nurses joining professional registers
- Strategies identifiable at health authority/board level for addressing priority health needs amongst refugee populations

Potential sources of such data: DoH/NHS central records; LHCC and practice records; professional body registers; health authority/board reports.



Social bridges

Establishing social connections with those of other national, ethnic or religious groupings – ‘mixing’ – is essential to establish the ‘two way’ interaction at the heart of many definitions of integration. Creating bridges to other communities supports social cohesion, and opens up opportunities for broadening cultural understanding, widening economic opportunities etc.

Practice level

- Participation rates of refugees in youth clubs, childcare facilities, sports clubs etc. (in relation to ethnic diversity of locality)
- Extent to which school sports teams, out-of-school activities and children’s friendship networks span the ethnic/religious composition of catchment area
- The proportion of refugees who report actively mixing with people from different ethnic backgrounds in everyday situations
- Number of refugees undertaking voluntary work in the community in the past month
- Reported public attitudes to refugees

Potential sources of such data: project enrolment records; school records; local surveys; LA monitoring of community cohesion; Home Office Citizenship Survey.

Policy level

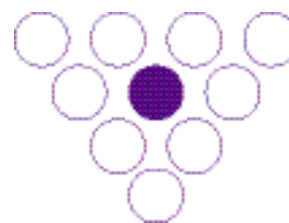
Core indicators:

- The proportion of refugees who report actively mixing with people from different ethnic backgrounds in everyday situations
- Number of refugees undertaking voluntary work in the community in the past month

Other indicators:

- Reported public attitudes to refugees
- Perceived friendliness of local people (by refugees and non-refugees)

Potential sources of such data: HO longitudinal survey; Home Office Citizenship Survey; Audit Commission assessment of cohesion within CPA; programme records; attitude surveys.



Social bonds

Refugees themselves – and most approaches to integration – understand that a sense of belonging to a particular group or community is crucial. Without this sense of identification with a particular ethnic, religious or geographical community, integration risks being ‘assimilation’. This domain assesses the ‘bonds’ that support such belonging.

Practice level

- Numbers actively engaged with Refugee Community Organisations
- Frequency of community arts events, cultural festivals etc. celebrating traditions of refugee communities
- Number of refugees regularly attending places of religious worship or involved in religious group or association
- Number of contacts with relatives (in person and by phone) in last week reported by refugees (compared to general population)
- Sense of ‘belonging’ to neighbourhood and local area reported by refugees

Potential sources of such data: project monitoring; local surveys; qualitative interviews; Home Office Citizenship Survey

Policy level

Core indicators:

- Number of registered refugee community organisations (current totals and those operational for two years or more)
- Number of reported social contacts with members of own ethnic group

Other indicators:

- National press and media coverage of events promoting diverse cultural heritage of refugee communities

Potential sources of such data: umbrella voluntary organisation records; HO longitudinal survey; media coverage reviews; Home Office Citizenship Survey.



Social links

Engagement with local governmental and non-governmental services, civic duties, political processes etc. demonstrate a further set of social connections supporting integration. Linkage into such activities provides a 'third dimension' of social connection (alongside bonds with ones own community and bridges to others) relevant to assessing integration.

Practice level

- Utilisation of local services and amenities by refugees
- Number of refugees assuming office or representational functions with local community organisations or committees (e.g. playgroup board, patient group, residents' association, neighbourhood renewal partnership, warden scheme etc.)
- Number of refugees active within school PTAs or governing bodies
- Number of refugees on membership roll of, and assuming political office through, registered political parties
- Number of refugees employed by local council

Potential sources of such data: project and programme records; local surveys; political party records; local authority records.

Policy level

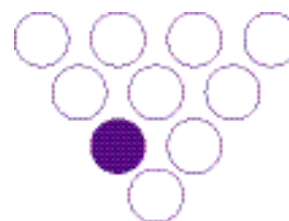
Core indicators:

- Number of registered non-governmental agencies with one or more refugee on their management board
- Number of refugees on membership roll of, and assuming political office through, registered political parties

Other indicators:

- Number of refugees employed by local councils (and other public bodies)

Potential sources of such data: Charities Commission and umbrella voluntary organisation records; political party records; local authority records.



Language and cultural knowledge

Such skills facilitate social connection, both with other communities and with state and voluntary agencies. Cultural knowledge includes very practical information for daily living (e.g. regarding transport, utilities, benefits etc.) as well as customs and expectations. The domain should also reflect measures of wider community knowledge of the cultural background of refugees.

Practice level

- Number of refugees enrolled in English* language classes
- Proportion of refugees for which professional interpreting service to support consultation with public-sector facilities, when required, is available
- Knowledge of local services and facilities amongst refugees
- Number of refugees reporting regular accessing of English* language media (television, radio and/or newspapers)
- Knowledge of customs, culture and history of refugee communities within non-refugee local population

Potential sources of such data: local FE colleges; learning and skills councils; programme records; local surveys.

Policy level

Core indicators:

- Proportion of refugees demonstrating English* language fluency at ESOL level 2 within two years of receiving refugee status
- Proportion of people living in areas of significant refugee settlement who feel that local ethnic differences are respected and valued

Other indicators:

- The availability and uptake of public-sector interpreter and translation services for refugees

Potential sources of such data: DfES reports; HOCS; utilisation surveys.

* or, where appropriate, Welsh or Scottish Gaelic



Safety and stability

Community safety is a common concern amongst refugees and within the broader communities in which they live. Racial harassment and crime erodes confidence, constrains engagement in social connection, and distorts cultural knowledge.

Practice level

- Proportion of refugees reporting experience of racial, cultural or religious harassment
- Number of racial incidents involving refugees recorded by local police
- The proportion of residents in areas of refugee settlement who feel that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds can get on well together
- Level of fear/insecurity reported by refugees
- Refugees' reported level of trust in the police
- Reported incidents of bullying and racist abuse in schools involving refugees
- Mean length of residence at current address across refugee households
- Number of refugees reporting satisfaction with local area as a place to live

Potential sources of such data: local surveys; programme records; HMIC/Home Office records; LA Best Value Performance Indicators; Home Office Citizenship Survey.

Policy level

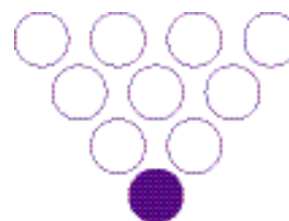
Core indicators:

- Proportion of refugees living in areas with high reported crime rates (upper quartile)
- Number of racial incidents involving refugees recorded by police

Other indicators:

- Mean length of residence at current address across refugee households

Potential sources of such data: HMIC/Home Office records; LA Best Value Performance Indicators; Comprehensive Performance Assessment; HOCS; British Crime Survey.



Rights and citizenship

This domain is used to assess the extent to which refugees are provided with the basis for full and equal engagement within UK society (*which may* lead to a formal application for citizenship). This domain focuses upon the enablement of rights for those ultimately granted full refugee status or leave to remain.

Practice level

- Mean length of asylum application procedure for successful claimants
- Access to – and utilisation of – legal and welfare benefits advice by refugees compared to general population
- Refugees' reported sense of equity in access to services and entitlements
- Number of refugees voting in local and parliamentary elections
- Rates of application for citizenship by refugees

Potential sources of such data: HO records; local surveys; qualitative interviews

Policy Level

Core indicators:

- Mean length of asylum application procedure for successful claimants
- Rates of application for citizenship by refugees

Other indicators:

- Acceptance rate of family reunion applications by refugees
- Proportion of refugees involved in political party or trade union in past 12 months (compared with general population)
- Number of refugees consulted in the course of general public surveys

Potential sources of such data: HO records; HOCS; survey records.

References

- Ager, A. (ed.) (1999) *Refugees: Perspectives on the Experience of Forced Migration*. Cassell: London.
- Ager, A. and Eyber, C. (2002) *Indicators of Integration: A Review of Indicators of Refugee Integration*. Report to the Home Office on behalf of Michael Bell Associates.
- Ager, A, Strang, A, O'May, F. and Garner, P. (2002) *Indicators of Integration: A Conceptual Analysis of Refugee Integration*. Report to the Home Office on behalf of Michael Bell Associates.
- Castles, S, Korac, M, Vasta, E. and Vertovec, S. (2001) *Integration: Mapping the Field*. Report of a project carried out by The University of Oxford Centre for Migration and Policy Research and Refugee Studies Centre: Oxford.
- Council of Europe (1997) *Measurement and Indicators of Integration*. COE: Strasbourg.
- MBA (2003) Evaluation of Challenge Fund and ERF Projects: Progress Report to the Home Office. Michael Bell Associates.
- MORI (2003) Refugee Study Evaluation Survey: Survey of Clients of Home Office Challenge Fund and European Refugee Fund. Report to IRSS, Home Office.
- Peckham *et al.* (2004) The impact of Home Office funded services for refugees (Home Office on-line report 45/04).
- Strang, A, Ager, A. and O'Brien, O. (2003) *Indicators of Integration: The Experience of Integration*. Report to the Home Office on behalf of Michael Bell Associates.
- Woolcock, M. (1998) Social Capital and Economic Development: Towards a Theoretical Synthesis and Policy Framework. *Theory and Society*, 27 (2), 151-208.