

# New Scots Refugee Integration Strategy

2018 - 2022

SUMMARY



World Refugee Day, 20 June 2017, George Square, Glasgow.  
Credit: Roddy Scott



This booklet is a short summary of the New Scots Refugee Integration Strategy 2018 – 2022.  
The full strategy document is available online at [www.gov.scot/newscotsstrategy](http://www.gov.scot/newscotsstrategy)

“Scots have really opened their hearts to refugees. That warm welcome is greatly appreciated and, with global displacement at record levels, it’s more important than ever. This second New Scots strategy is an extremely valuable initiative, and UNHCR commends the fact that refugees and asylum seekers are active in shaping its concept and delivery. We very much endorse Scotland’s vision of refugee integration as a two-way process, bringing positive change in refugees and host communities, and helping to build a more compassionate and diverse society.”

Gonzalo Vargas Llosa,  
UNHCR’s Representative to the UK



Credit: Alana Nabulsi



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“New Scots recognises that refugees and asylum seekers face challenges which can limit their inclusion in our society, but it also recognises that refugees bring strength, knowledge and skills. They are assets to our communities and, as they rebuild their lives here, they help to make Scotland stronger, more compassionate and more successful as a nation.”

**Angela Constance MSP**, Cabinet Secretary for Communities, Social Security and Equalities

“I am delighted that this new strategy has been even more ambitious, both in the reach of the engagement process and in the core outcomes set. With on-going commitment from communities, practitioners and policy makers, it offers the way forward to an increasingly diverse, thriving and cohesive Scotland.”

**Dr Alison Strang**, Chair of New Scots Core Group, Queen Margaret University

“I am pleased that COSLA has been able to work with a wide range of partners to develop a second strategy which builds on the work done to date.

Local authorities across Scotland are committed to supporting refugees and asylum seekers to build a new life.”

**Councillor Kelly Parry**, Spokesperson for COSLA Community and Wellbeing Board

“Scottish Refugee Council is strongly committed to implementation of New Scots and to share our expertise of the last three decades with communities, as they provide a warm welcome and a new life to those who are seeking our protection.”

**Sabir Zazai**, Chief Executive, Scottish Refugee Council



Credit: Iman Tajik



According to international law, a refugee is a 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 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 as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it.

Article 1(A) 1951 UN Convention relating to the Status of Refugees.

An asylum seeker is a person who has applied to be recognised as a refugee.

There are also distinct forms of complementary and humanitarian protection which provide rights and entitlement similar to refugee status.

Under current constitutional arrangements, asylum matters are reserved to the UK Government and handled by the Home Office. This includes operation of the asylum system, provision of asylum accommodation and support, and the management and decisions related to UK resettlement programmes.

Many of the services which are essential to support refugees and asylum seekers to integrate into our communities, including healthcare and education, are devolved to the Scottish Government.

# Vision

**For a welcoming Scotland where refugees and asylum seekers are able to rebuild their lives from the day they arrive.**

To achieve this vision, we will work to ensure that Scotland:

- Is a place of safety for everyone, where people are able to live free from persecution as valued members of communities.
- Enables everyone to pursue their ambitions through education, employment, culture and leisure activities.
- Has strong, inclusive and resilient communities where everyone is able to access the support and services they need and is able to exercise their rights.
- Is a country that values diversity, where people are able to use and share their culture, skills and experiences, as they build strong relationships and connections.

**The New Scots strategy sees integration as a long-term, two-way process, involving positive change in both individuals and host communities, which leads to cohesive, diverse communities.**

The New Scots strategy aims to support refugees and asylum seekers in Scotland's communities. This includes people who have been granted refugee status or another humanitarian protection status; people seeking asylum; and those whose application for asylum has been refused, but who remain in Scotland.



# New Scots Approach

There are five principles which form the New Scots approach:

## ***Integration From Day One***

The key principle of the New Scots strategy is that refugees and asylum seekers should be supported to integrate into communities from day one of arrival, and not just once leave to remain has been granted.

## ***A Rights Based Approach***

The New Scots strategy aims to empower people to know about their rights and to understand how to exercise them.

We support refugees and asylum seekers because it is the right thing to do; people should be able to live safely and realise their human rights.

## ***Refugee Involvement***

The New Scots strategy actively encourages refugees and asylum seekers to be involved in helping to shape the strategy and its delivery.

## ***Inclusive Communities***

The New Scots strategy supports refugees, asylum seekers and our communities to be involved in building stronger, resilient communities which enable everyone to be active citizens.

## ***Partnership and Collaboration***

The New Scots strategy has been developed collaboratively to coordinate the efforts of organisations and community groups across Scotland involved in supporting refugees and asylum seekers.

## New Scots 2018 – 2022

This second New Scots strategy builds on the first strategy and is also informed by engagement which took place across Scotland over the summer of 2017. It is built on a foundation of collaboration, partnership and engagement which will be crucial to successful implementation. The strategy aims to be dynamic, so that it can adapt to changing political, policy or international contexts, which have an impact on refugees and asylum seekers living in Scotland.

### **New Scots Overarching Outcomes:**

1. Refugees and asylum seekers live in safe, welcoming and cohesive communities and are able to build diverse relationships and connections.
2. Refugees and asylum seekers understand their rights, responsibilities and entitlements, and are able to exercise them to pursue full and independent lives.
3. Refugees and asylum seekers are able to access well-coordinated services, which recognise and meet their rights and needs.
4. Policy, strategic planning and legislation, which have an impact on refugees and asylum seekers, are informed by their rights, needs and aspirations.

*For a welcoming Scotland where refugees and asylum seekers are able to rebuild their lives from the day they arrive.*





# Needs of Asylum Seekers

**“Everyone has the right to seek and enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution.”**

Article 14(1) Universal Declaration of Human Rights

## Objectives and Actions

The following initial actions set out the work related to the needs of asylum seekers, which will be progressed in the first instance:

**Outcome: Refugees and asylum seekers understand their rights, responsibilities and entitlements, and are able to exercise them to pursue full and independent lives.**

**Objective:** what we want to achieve

**Action:** what we will do

Asylum seekers are supported to understand the asylum system and their rights and entitlements throughout the process, and are able to engage with services and systems accordingly.

Review and assess the effectiveness of information and support, including advocacy support, provided to or needed by asylum seekers.

Identify how interpretation and translation services can be improved to better meet the needs of asylum seekers.

Ensure that asylum seekers better understand and exercise their rights around access to travel support, where that is provided, and identify and seek to address any particular challenges for asylum seekers in this regard.

**Outcome: Refugees and asylum seekers are able to access well-coordinated services, which recognise and meet their rights and needs.**

<b>Objective:</b> what we want to achieve	<b>Action:</b> what we will do
Services supporting asylum seekers are accessible, well-coordinated and responsive to the needs of asylum seekers, and support their integration into Scotland's communities.	Produce an up to date picture of the services and processes that support asylum seekers by building on previous work on mapping the asylum journey.
	Build a better understanding of the needs of asylum seekers and the particular challenges that they face by identifying, gathering and sharing relevant data in relation to asylum in Scotland.
	Work to address gaps that are identified in service provision and referral processes.
	Share and roll out, as appropriate, best practice in service provision from elsewhere in the UK and beyond.

**Outcome: Policy, strategic planning and legislation, which have an impact on refugees and asylum seekers, are informed by their rights, needs and aspirations.**

**Objective:** what we want to achieve

**Action:** what we will do

Policy, strategic planning and legislation in relation to asylum are informed by the needs and aspirations of asylum seekers and local communities.

Inform and influence the Home Office consultation and tendering process, in relation to the new asylum accommodation and advice contracts.

Work collaboratively with the successful bidder(s) after the awarding of the new asylum accommodation and advice contracts.

Inform and influence strategic planning around the widening of dispersal, and share expertise and learning with local authorities that agree to, or are considering, involvement.

Examine the implications of the Immigration Act 2016 and other UK and Scottish legislation that impacts asylum seekers and respond accordingly.

Support the response to the Scottish Parliament's Equalities and Human Rights Committee Inquiry and report into destitution, that are relevant to asylum seekers.

Support the engagement of asylum seekers in policy formulation and in the strategic planning and development of services for them.



Credit: Iman Tajik



## Employability and Welfare Rights

**“Everyone has a right to work**, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment.”

Article 23(1) Universal Declaration of Human Rights

**“Everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security** and is entitled to realisation, through national effort and international cooperation and in accordance with the organisation and resources of each State, of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality.”

Article 22 Universal Declaration of Human Rights

## Objectives and Actions

The following initial actions set out the work related to employability and welfare rights, which will be progressed in the first instance:

<b>Outcome: Refugees and asylum seekers understand their rights, responsibilities and entitlements, and are able to exercise them to pursue full and independent lives.</b>	
<b>Objective:</b> what we want to achieve	<b>Action:</b> what we will do
Refugees are supported to move on from asylum support within the 28-day move-on period, by ensuring that benefits are in place when asylum support ends.	Support the Home Office and Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) in the evaluation and development of the '28-Day Move-On' pilot to facilitate speedier access to welfare benefits.
	Work with appropriate agencies to review the processes in place to access welfare benefits for all those granted 'leave to remain', aged 16 and over, and to help refugees obtain the support they are entitled to.
	Provide information on post decision processes to successful asylum applicants in their own language.
Refugees are better able to understand and articulate their skills and competencies to support them to secure employment.	Offer all new refugees access to information and advice on their rights, choices and options available, in relation to employability, welfare and benefits.
	Develop opportunities for refugees to build and develop their skills, through volunteering, work placements or work shadowing.
	Develop guidance and good practice on the development of Personal Integration Plans for refugees, to outline goals and aspirations.



**Outcome: Refugees and asylum seekers are able to access well-coordinated services, which recognise and meet their rights and needs.**

<b>Objective:</b> what we want to achieve	<b>Action:</b> what we will do
Refugees can build their skills, secure employment and gain financial independence.	Support development of a model for a recognition and accreditation process to identify prior qualifications, skills and learning, and develop sector specific employment pathways.
	Improve availability and access to appropriate English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) provision. Support ESOL providers to improve links with vocational training providers.
	Work with employability and welfare service providers to improve understanding of refugees' skills and support better use of the claimant commitment. <sup>1</sup>
Refugees can access services designed to support entrepreneurialism and establish businesses.	Develop pathways for refugees to realise entrepreneurial skills and talents, and make best use of business development services.

<sup>1</sup> A Claimant Commitment sets out what claimants have agreed to do to prepare for and look for work, or to increase earnings if already working. It will be based on personal circumstances and will be reviewed and updated on an on-going basis.  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/universal-credit-and-your-claimant-commitment-quick-guide/universal-credit-and-your-claimant-commitment>

**Outcome: Policy, strategic planning and legislation, which have an impact on refugees and asylum seekers, are informed by their rights, needs and aspirations.**

**Objective:** what we want to achieve

**Action:** what we will do

Policy, strategic planning and legislation in relation to welfare are informed by the needs and aspirations of refugees and asylum seekers.

Influence future devolved welfare powers to address the needs of refugees and asylum seekers.

# Housing

**“Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.”**

Article 25 (1) Universal Declaration of Human Rights

## Objectives and Actions

The following initial actions set out the work related to housing, which will be progressed in the first instance:

**Outcome: Refugees and asylum seekers live in safe, welcoming and cohesive communities and are able to build diverse relationships and connections.**

**Objective:** what we want to achieve

Refugees are able to fully access support to settle in their new home, and as a result are able to settle and integrate successfully.

**Action:** what we will do

Improve refugee and asylum seeker access to support, advice and advocacy from the third sector and community to help with settling and orientation in their new homes and communities.

Ensure that housing services that work with refugees and asylum seekers are aware of safe reporting methods, and are using third party hate crime reporting to increase the numbers of people reporting hate crime.

Start dialogue with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI) organisations in regard to particular issues faced by LGBTI refugees and asylum seekers, and raised through the New Scots engagement process in relation to accommodation and issues of safety.

**Outcome: Refugees and asylum seekers understand their rights, responsibilities and entitlements and are able to exercise them to pursue full and independent lives.**

<b>Objective:</b> what we want to achieve	<b>Action:</b> what we will do
A range of suitable housing options is available to refugees in Scotland.	Ensure that Housing Hubs make housing options information easily accessible to refugees and asylum seekers within all local authority areas, to enable refugees to better understand and exercise their housing rights and options.
New refugees are supported to move from asylum accommodation to a more permanent home, during the 28-day period, by agencies working together to ensure they are aware of their long-term options and are not left without somewhere to live.	Continue to build on partnerships with Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) <sup>2</sup> in Glasgow, including the possibility of transferring tenancy agreements to allow new refugees to remain in their asylum accommodation.
	Build partnerships with local authorities and RSLs outside Glasgow to open up alternative routes into settled housing.
	Develop an 'Exit Pack' for new refugees, to ensure they know how to access services to set up their new home.

**Outcome: Refugees and asylum seekers are able to access well-coordinated services, which recognise and meet their rights and needs.**

<b>Objective:</b> what we want to achieve	<b>Action:</b> what we will do
<p>Refugees are supported to understand the full range of housing options available to them and as a result are able to make the best possible choice for them.</p>	<p>Include information on best practice working with refugees and asylum seekers within the housing options training toolkit.</p>
	<p>Promote the Scottish Refugee Council’s Housing Practitioners’ Guide to Integrating Asylum Seekers and Refugees throughout Scotland’s housing providers.</p>
	<p>Start dialogue with LGBTI organisations in regard to particular issues faced by LGBTI refugees and asylum seekers, and raised through the New Scots engagement process in relation to accessing suitable accommodation and support.</p>
<p>Refugees are able to fully access support to settle in their new home, and as a result are able to settle and integrate successfully.</p>	<p>Share best practice and develop approaches to service delivery to improve refugee and asylum seeker access to support from the third sector and community, to help with settling and orientation in their new home and area.</p>



Credit: Morag Brown

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## Education

“**Everyone has the right to education.** Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.”

Article 26 (1) Universal Declaration of Human Rights

### Objectives and Actions

The following initial actions set out the work related to education, which will be progressed in the first instance:

**Outcome: Refugees and asylum seekers understand their rights, responsibilities and entitlements, and are able to exercise them to pursue full and independent lives.**

**Objective:** what we want to achieve

Young refugees and asylum seekers (and their parents, carers and guardians) are aware of, and understand the options available to them, in terms of learning, education opportunities and funding support.

**Action:** what we will do

Continue to promote existing information on education entitlement and support to refugees and asylum seekers.

Identify funding support to access further and higher education, and promote those sources to young refugees and asylum seekers, and those working with them.

Explore and promote wider achievement and alternative pathways with the CLD, further and higher education sectors and other partners.

**Outcome: Refugees and asylum seekers are able to access well-coordinated services, which recognise and meet their rights and needs.**

<b>Objective:</b> what we want to achieve	<b>Action:</b> what we will do
All staff within education and learning settings are able to effectively communicate with refugees and asylum seekers.	Share examples of adapting or changing service communication to better meet the needs of refugees and asylum seekers, by identifying and promoting informal activity that helps to raise awareness of best practice when working with refugees and asylum seekers.
	Identify and promote formal activity and training programmes that support frontline staff in public services to communicate with people, whose first language is not English.
	Embed a range of activity into existing training programmes or professional development activity to ensure accurate information on education is shared.

**Outcome: Policy, strategic planning and legislation, which have an impact on refugees and asylum seekers, are informed by their rights, needs and aspirations.**

<b>Objective:</b> what we want to achieve	<b>Action:</b> what we will do
The recognition of qualifications enables refugees to progress on to further learning or into employment.	Support development of a model for a recognition and accreditation process to identify prior qualifications, skills and learning, and develop sector specific employment pathways.

# Language

“[language is] the path to get better at everything in my life.”<sup>3</sup>

Engagement to develop the New Scots refugee integration strategy identified language as crucial to all elements of integration.

## Objectives and Actions

The following initial actions set out the work related to language, which will be progressed in the first instance:

**Outcome: Refugees and asylum seekers live in safe, welcoming and cohesive communities and are able to build diverse relationships and connections.**

**Objective:** what we want to achieve

**Action:** what we will do

Refugees have the opportunity to share their language and culture with their local communities.

Promote good practice, in which the home language of refugees is used in positive ways.

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3 Quote from refugee: [http://www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk/assets/0001/1142/Full\\_Integration\\_Report\\_June\\_2016.pdf](http://www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk/assets/0001/1142/Full_Integration_Report_June_2016.pdf)

**Outcome: Refugees and asylum seekers understand their rights, responsibilities and entitlements, and are able to exercise them to pursue full and independent lives.**

<b>Objective:</b> what we want to achieve	<b>Action:</b> what we will do
<p>Refugees and asylum seekers have the opportunity to achieve the language and the language qualifications they need to progress to further learning or employment.</p>	<p>Continue to monitor the uptake of ESOL qualifications from Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) level 2 to SCQF level 6, across sectors (school, college and community providers) in Scotland.</p>
	<p>Identify possible gaps in relation to preparation and orientation for academic study, to enable students to access further and higher education.</p>
	<p>Gather evidence of any barriers to offering ESOL qualifications and identify ways to overcome these barriers.</p>
	<p>Explore how digital technology could be used to increase access to ESOL provision for learners in areas where provision is limited.</p>
<p>Newly arrived adults and young people with language and literacy needs know about their options for language acquisition, and effective practice is promoted and shared.</p>	<p>Consider initial assessment practice with ESOL practitioners, with a view to developing guidance on good practice on different approaches and outcomes for pre-literate learners.</p>
	<p>Continue to promote the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) ESOL qualifications to practitioners across the sectors (school, college and community providers), to raise awareness of the value of qualifications for learners.</p>



**Outcome: Refugees and asylum seekers are able to access well-coordinated services, which recognise and meet their rights and needs.**

**Objective:** what we want to achieve

**Action:** what we will do

Those working with refugees and asylum seekers improve their understanding of the language barriers and how to overcome them.

Develop, trial and evaluate an online learning module on supporting bilingual learners in the school sector.

Agree and explore approaches to ESOL delivery that take account of the needs of refugees and asylum seekers, by working through local ESOL partnerships to create effective models of practice.

Consider use of an online learning facility for learning or training opportunities related to language.

Credit: Roddy Scott



## Health and Wellbeing

**“Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and **medical care and necessary social services**, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.”**

Article 25 (1) Universal Declaration of Human Rights

### Objectives and Actions

The following initial actions set out the work related to health and wellbeing, which will be progressed in the first instance:

**Outcome: Refugees and asylum seekers understand their rights, responsibilities and entitlements and are able to exercise them to pursue full and independent lives.**

**Objective:** what we want to achieve

**Action:** what we will do

Refugees and asylum seekers are able to look after and improve their own health and wellbeing.

Work with NHS 24 and health and social care partnerships to improve the availability of information about people’s rights and entitlements and how to access services. Ensure this work is linked into *Making it Easier* – the refreshed health literacy action plan.

Increase participation of refugees and asylum seekers in local and national health forums and strategy groups.

Extend opportunities for refugees and asylum seekers to benefit from peer support to improve their knowledge of health care systems and health improvement strategies, including those that have a positive impact on mental health and wellbeing.

**Outcome: Refugees and asylum seekers are able to access well-coordinated services, which recognise and meet their rights and needs.**

<b>Objective:</b> what we want to achieve	<b>Action:</b> what we will do
<p>Refugees and asylum seekers, who use health and social care services, have positive experiences of those services, and have their dignity respected.</p>	<p>Continue to identify and disseminate evidence about the health needs of refugees and asylum seekers, to support services in carrying out Health Inequalities Impact Assessments, and to meet their public sector equality duty.</p>
	<p>Ensure complaints procedures are accessible to all refugees and asylum seekers.</p>
<p>Services are more responsive to the needs of refugees and asylum seekers.</p>	<p>Ensure sufficient guidance and training for health and social care staff on the issues faced by asylum seekers, in line with the recommendation of the Equalities and Human Rights Committee's report, <i>Hidden Lives - New Beginnings</i>.</p>
	<p>Ensure trauma informed practice is embedded into health services and other service provision.</p>
	<p>Share best practice and quality guidance for interpreting services used within health and social care to improve practice by health and social care staff.</p>

**Outcome: Policy, strategic planning and legislation, which have an impact on refugees and asylum seekers, are informed by their rights, needs and aspirations.**

**Objective:** what we want to achieve

**Action:** what we will do

Relevant policy, strategic planning and legislation are informed by the underlying social factors, which impact refugee and asylum seeker health and wellbeing.

Work to identify data that monitors the mental health and wellbeing of refugees and asylum seekers, and its impact on integration, to improve data usage and inform relevant strategies.

Identify research priorities to provide further evidence of the impact of social factors on health and wellbeing of refugees and asylum seekers.

Continue to identify and disseminate evidence about the health needs of refugees and asylum seekers to inform planning of health and social care services.

Respond to consultation and engagement opportunities to ensure policy and practice associated with wider social factors is informed by refugee and asylum seeker health needs and rights.



Credit: Erin and Sean at Your Voice



## Communities, Culture and Social Connections

“**Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community**, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.”

Article 27 (1) Universal Declaration of Human Rights

### Objectives and Actions

The following initial actions set out the work related to communities, culture and social connections, which will be progressed in the first instance.

**Outcome: Refugees and asylum seekers live in safe, welcoming and cohesive communities and are able to build diverse relationships and connections.**

**Objective:** what we want to achieve

Communities are aware of the needs of refugee and asylum seeker communities and actively seek to involve them in community life.

**Action:** what we will do

Map and assess existing local and national initiatives that prepare local communities where refugees and asylum seekers arrive, including those which promote solidarity; positive community and interfaith relationships; foster understanding of refugees and asylum seekers in schools; and tackle racism.

Develop new initiatives and share good practice and research across Scotland with statutory, voluntary and community organisations working with refugees and asylum seekers.

Social isolation experienced by refugees and asylum seekers is reduced, as they become active in their local communities.	Map and assess existing individual mentoring and orientation schemes that help refugees and asylum seekers to build social connections and develop cultural knowledge, and consider the viability of expanding to all refugees and asylum seekers in Scotland.
	Promote accurate reporting of refugees and asylum seekers in the Scottish media through the Refugee Festival Scotland Media Awards, with the National Union of Journalists.

**Outcome: Refugees and asylum seekers understand their rights, responsibilities and entitlements, and are able to exercise them to pursue full and independent lives.**

<b>Objective:</b> what we want to achieve	<b>Action:</b> what we will do
Refugees and asylum seekers engage in cultural, heritage and sport activities and celebrate their own culture, talents and contributions.	Promote understanding of cultural rights to refugees and asylum seekers.
	Provide opportunities for refugees and asylum seekers to programme, produce work for and participate in Refugee Festival Scotland, as well as other national and local festivals.
	Identify and promote existing support to refugee professional artists and cultural leaders.

**Outcome: Refugees and asylum seekers are able to access well-coordinated services, which recognise and meet their rights and needs.**

**Objective:** what we want to achieve

**Action:** what we will do

Local community groups and refugee and asylum seeker-led organisations play an active role in supporting refugee integration.

Identify and share good practice in relation to partnership approaches across statutory, voluntary and community organisations, to the planning and delivery of all refugee programmes in Scotland, including asylum, resettlement and community sponsorship.

Deliver a national conference for community, faith-based and refugee-led organisations to share expertise, practice and support capacity building, with a view to developing a national network.

Clarify rights, reduce barriers and promote good practice and participation in cultural, leisure, heritage and sports opportunities.

**Outcome: Policy, strategic planning and legislation, which have an impact on refugees and asylum seekers, are informed by their rights, needs and aspirations.**

**Objective:** what we want to achieve

**Action:** what we will do

The development and implementation of national legislation and strategies related to communities, culture and social connections are informed by the experiences of refugees and asylum seekers.

Ensure the voices and experiences of refugees and asylum seekers are considered within Scotland's Cultural Strategy and other national strategies related to culture, sport and heritage.

Support the inclusion of refugee integration within the implementation of existing legislation and policy related to communities, such as the requirements under the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015.



## Contributing to New Scots

The New Scots strategy has been built on a model of partnership working, led by the Scottish Government, COSLA and the Scottish Refugee Council. The strategy also draws on the support and expertise of many partners across public services, local authorities, the third sector, the private sector and community groups, who are all working together to achieve collective goals.

Many organisations and people across Scotland may not be directly involved in the implementation of the strategy, but can still contribute by welcoming and supporting people in communities. Organisations and community groups can use the information contained in the strategy to plan activity and service provision in a way which enables asylum seekers and refugees to participate.

Everyone can contribute to New Scots by showing support for refugees and asylum seekers. Simple ways to show support include:

- Being welcoming to refugees, asylum seekers and indeed anyone, who is new in the local community.
- Finding out more about refugees and asylum seekers, for example, by attending events like Refugee Festival Scotland, which is held in June each year.
- Volunteering. There are a number of organisations across Scotland which welcome volunteers. Even if local opportunities do not directly engage with refugees and asylum seekers, it is still possible to contribute to the wider community. Opportunities can be found through Volunteer Scotland.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.volunteerscotland.net/>

Credit: North Lanarkshire Council





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