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Certificate of naturalisation  
British Nationality Act 1981  
HOME OFFICE  
as a  
BRITISH CITIZEN

# **Becoming British Citizens? Experiences and Opinions of Refugees Living in Scotland**

**Emma Stewart  
Gareth Mulvey**

**University of Strathclyde and  
Scottish Refugee Council**

PASSPORT

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## Glossary

ARC	Asylum Registration Card
BME	Black and Minority Ethnic
ELR	Exceptional Leave to Remain
EU	European Union
FE	Further Education
HE	Higher Education
HP	Humanitarian Protection
ICAR	Information Centre about Asylum and Refugees
ILR	Indefinite Leave to Remain
NASS	National Asylum Support System
SRC	Scottish Refugee Council
TLR	Temporary Leave to Remain
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UKBA	United Kingdom Borders Agency

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## Introduction

The aim of this project was to explore the experiences and opinions of refugees living in Scotland towards the UK citizenship process and their feelings about becoming British citizens. In the wider context of the social cohesion agenda, the UK Government has promoted the integration of refugees. Alongside this, there have been several changes that have impacted upon refugees including English language and Life in the UK tests, citizenship ceremonies and the introduction of 5 years leave to remain. Further changes were also proposed by the previous Government, including a period of 'probationary citizenship'. This research focuses upon the growing body of literature and discourse surrounding citizenship to investigate these issues. By drawing upon secondary literature, analysis of statistical data and in-depth interviews the project explores both refugee opinions about existing processes and their impact on integration and sense of belonging. Specifically the project examines the reasons why refugees decide to apply for British citizenship or not; explores the difficulties that refugees have faced in progressing towards citizenship; examines the views of refugees on the concepts of integration, citizenship, Britishness and Scottishness as well as determining how becoming British citizens (or not) impacts upon the integration of refugees.

This research project started from the premise that refugees' feelings about citizenship and national identity have not been fully explored. Whilst there is some research on this matter in the UK context (ICAR 2010; Morrell 2009; Rutter et al 2007), the research that does exist does not encompass a full range of possibilities for taking citizenship, and crucially does not fully address reasons for not so doing. Furthermore, there has been no research conducted with refugees that explores the issue of locality within a devolved context and therefore attitudes and feelings about Scotland and Scottishness.

The project adopted a mixed methodological approach, employing both quantitative and qualitative methods. The project consisted of three main methodological phases including analysis of secondary literature (including academic and grey literature), analysis of secondary data on UK citizenship and conducting in-depth interviews with refugees living in Scotland. Below is a brief outline of each section of the report.

The first section contextualises key policy developments by providing a historical analysis of immigration policy in the UK. The inter-relationship between policy and the citizenship process is highlighted throughout. This is followed by a review of the literature pertaining to citizenship and identity. This begins with an examination of the theoretical

literature before exploring the impact of globalisation and transnationalism upon citizenship. The review then relates these theories to the national level by examining how theories of citizenship in UK policy have been addressed in the literature. This naturally leads on to discussion of what it means to be British and the way this interacts with feelings of belonging. There follows a section about refugees and citizenship which links to the literature about refugee belonging. In particular this section examines the notion of instrumental citizenship among refugees. While immigration matters are reserved within the British constitutional set up, there are differences between constituent parts of the UK. The final part of the literature review examines Scotland and Scottishness and seeks to uncover what existing literature tells us about identity and belonging within the Scottish context.

Following the literature review, the methodology is outlined in Section three. This section provides an outline of the methodological basis of the research project. This begins with an overview of the available statistics, and what they tell us about refugees and citizenship. Section three then proceeds to highlight the methodological approach taken by this research project. The empirical basis of the project is 30 qualitative in-depth interviews that were conducted with refugees in Scotland during 2010. Emphasis is placed on the selection of interviewees and the ethics of the research. This includes the issue of accessing interviewees, before outlining the approach taken in interview sampling. This section finishes by outlining some of the key demographics of the interview sample, including gender, region of origin, age and when they first entered the UK.

Section four then moves on to explore the key findings from the research project. This begins by examining citizenship as a legal concept, with some attention also paid to the notion of a hierarchy of rights between various statuses experienced by respondents. Thus the process of moving from being an asylum seeker to a refugee, and a refugee to a citizen are highlighted according to the accompanying rights, or the perceptions of accompanying rights. The findings then move on to examine the practical or instrumental reasons for taking citizenship. These include the right to vote, access to travel documents, employment issues and access to services. The importance of children and their role in informing decision-making is

then discussed before the key issue of lack of choice in decision-making about whether to become a British citizen is outlined.

The main drivers to citizenship are discussed in Section 4.3. These drivers are focussed around the interdependent issues of security and fear. The role each plays in informing decision-making are discussed before the importance of temporary refugee status and how it relates to security and fear is outlined. This then leads to discussion about the process of becoming British citizens, including sources of information about citizenship, the Language and Knowledge of Life in the UK tests and the cost of citizenship. The section concludes by discussing the reasons some refugees may have for not wishing to become British citizens.

The report then moves on to discuss the importance of rights and responsibilities as they pertain to citizenship. This section discusses what interviewees feel about the rights and responsibilities that accompany citizenship, but also the way the balance between the two impacts upon integration. The final section of the findings concerns the importance of citizenship on identity and belonging, or the importance of belonging on decision-making regarding citizenship. This encompasses the importance for some interviewees, of their refugee identity, how national identities interact with a sense of belonging, and also how the existence of children in a family impacts upon this. This section concludes by discussing how refugees view British identity and whether they perceive any difference between it and a Scottish identity. In summary, the six key themes covered by the analysis include:

- the meaning of citizenship/legal status and hierarchy of rights;
- instrumentalism and citizenship;
- the key drivers to citizenship;
- becoming British citizens;
- the rights and duties of British citizens and;
- identity and belonging.

The report finishes with some conclusions drawn out of the report and makes a number of key recommendations emerging from these findings.

# 1 History of Immigration and Citizenship Policy in Britain

Whilst there is not space to highlight all of the policy developments of the last century that relate to immigration, nationality and citizenship, as policy sets the structures within which people move and stay (or leave), some comment on policy is required prior to the empirical work of the project being outlined and analysed (for further reading see Hansen 2004 and Joppke 1999). This necessarily focuses on the 20th century onwards as prior to that policy was largely absent, despite the existence of population movements (Hammar 2001). That said, some earlier developments are worth highlighting briefly. The Aliens Act of 1844 allowed the Home Secretary the power to grant naturalisation based on a character reference only, whilst the 1870 Naturalisation Act made naturalisation a more automatic process after 5 years of residence.

## 1.1 Immigration Policy in the 20th Century

Until the 1905 Aliens Act the entry of non-citizens into Britain was largely unrestricted. This Act was the first to explicitly create categories of good and bad migrants, being aimed at East European Jews who were characterised as a threat due to the number of Marxists in their ranks. The 1905 Act endowed the Home Secretary with the exclusive right to refuse entry as well as giving 'street level bureaucrats' (Lipsky 1980), a degree of power and influence in decision making. This Act was followed by the 1914 British Nationality and Status of Aliens Act, which was the first to establish concrete requirements for naturalisation. A one year residence minimum was established before people could apply for naturalisation. According to Hansen (2001) the 1914 Act also further endowed the Home Secretary with complete powers over immigration matters. A recent ICAR briefing (2010) points to continuity between recent UK Government proposals that participation in demonstrations impact on the right to remain with past legal restrictions. It points out that the 1919 Aliens Restriction Act made the promotion of 'industrial unrest' a deportable offence.

The 1948 British Nationality Act created a multitude of migrant categories within a 'Commonwealth of Nations'. Nevertheless, people in Commonwealth countries were still considered subjects while other categories had the right to live here and become citizens after one year of residence. Non empire migrants would face a need for five years of residence, knowledge of English and evidence of good character. The position of subjecthood can perhaps be seen as contributing to the present confusion regarding citizenship and nationality. Policy failed to recognise that citizenship in newly independent Commonwealth states was also those new states' nationalities.

After the Second World War labour migrants were actively sought from Britain's existing and former colonies. This resulted in relatively large numbers of Afro-Caribbean and Asian migrants moving to Britain. However, there was a backlash to these movements. Hansen (2001) points out that the coming restrictions on migratory movements can be seen as having some cross party consensus, with both main parties agreeing on its necessity, particularly regarding black migration. The outcome was the 1962 Commonwealth Immigration Act. This act ended the imperial unity of immigration practice, with restrictions being placed on the access of migrants from both colonies and former colonies to the UK. Until this point the symbolic importance of the Empire took precedence over concerns regarding migration, helped by the fact that comparatively few people had the ability to use their right to access the UK. Three types of labour vouchers were established in the 1962 Act, the first for those with a job offer, the second for those with sought after skills, and the last for the unskilled, issued on a first come first serve basis. While external restrictions were being developed, they were accompanied by a degree of liberalism for those already here, seen in the development of race relations legislation. This could be taken as a practical example of Hammar's (2006) contention that immigration and immigrant policies are different. For Hammar (2006) the former refers to entry while the latter concerns what happens once people get here. Alternatively if a sequential policy process approach is taken they could be seen as the same policy but at different stages.



Nevertheless anti-immigrant racism was evident and became a real political factor during the 1960's. According to Favell (1998, 320) this led the main political parties to create "a durable compromise of tight immigration control and self styled 'progressive' legislation", aimed at heading off any racial unrest. One outcome of this compromise was the 1968 Commonwealth Immigrants Act that was sped through Parliament "in an atmosphere of outright panic" (Joppke 1999, 108), due to 200,000 East African Asians having British passports and fears that they would use their existing rights to come to Britain. This Act further tightened the ability of Commonwealth citizens to come to the UK by effectively removing the citizenship rights of British passport holders. Jus soli<sup>1</sup> was dominant as applicants were required to show that they, their parents or their grandparents had been born in the UK which was easier for second and third generation white Australians, Canadians, South Africans and New Zealanders than for Indians, Pakistanis, black Africans and Afro-Caribbeans.

The 1971 Immigration Act was then intended to concretely clarify who did and who did not have the right of abode in the UK. The controversial introduction of patriality divided the world in two. Patriots were defined as citizens of the UK or colonies born in or with ancestral connection to the UK, residents of the UK for five years or more, or any Commonwealth citizen with a parent or grandparent in the UK. Patriots had the right to abode but non-patrials did not, "their entry to Britain being contingent on an immigration officer's 'leave to enter'" (Joppke 1999, 134). The Act thus removed any distinction between Commonwealth citizens with no blood links to the UK and 'aliens'. Non-patrials from the Commonwealth were now subject to the same work permit system already in place for aliens.

The expulsion of Ugandan Asians from Uganda by Idi Amin and the controversy regarding the arrival of some of their number in the UK was one of the triggers for the 1981 British Nationality Act, although this was the impetus to a broader view that reform was necessary. The 'tradition of paternal descent' was now seen as an anomaly (Hansen 2001, 79). The 1981 Act is seen as having fundamentally changed the whole focus of citizenship. Rather than "mapping out the relationship between citizen and state", the Act was an immigration act "designed to define, limit and remove entitlements to citizenship from British nationals" (Tyler 2010, 62).

The 1981 Act codified citizenship for the first time and was defined in a way that excluded the colonies. Patriots became citizens and non-patrials were divided in two, British Dependent Territories Citizens and British Overseas Citizens (Howard 2009). There was a loosening of the principle of jus soli as descent was limited to the second generation. In addition, the Act introduced language requirements for settlement along with the need for applicants to be of 'good character'. Three different types of citizenship were established; British citizenship, British dependent territories citizenship, and British overseas citizenship, with a hierarchy of rights attached to each of these. Family union rules were also tightened and the primary purpose rule introduced<sup>2</sup>.

A much more limited piece of legislation was passed in 1990 when the handover of Hong Kong to China prompted the British Nationality (Hong Kong) Act. This gave full citizenship rights to 50,000 Hong Kong Chinese and their dependents. However, with a much larger population wishing to become British citizens the Government placed a financial cut off on applications, meaning only applications from wealthier Hong Kong Chinese would be accepted. In some ways the Government borrowed from the Canadian points based system (Hansen 2001), which was a sign of things to come in immigration law.

<sup>1</sup> Jus soli refers to the tradition of citizenship being determined by place of birth. This would mean that anyone born within a nation would become a citizen. The main alternative is jus sanguinis which has been referred to as citizenship by blood and means that people with an ancestral link to a nation were entitled to citizenship.

<sup>2</sup> The primary purpose rule was introduced by the Conservative Government in the early 1980's and required immigration officers to question marriages in order to ensure that the reason for a visa applicant wishing to come to the UK was due to a marriage, and not due to a wish to evade immigration controls. In practice it allowed insinuating questions to be asked of couples seeking to live together in Britain, with a particular focus on arranged marriages from the Asian sub-continent.

The Conservative Government then introduced the first ever asylum specific legislation into law in 1993. Until then applicants for refugee status were processed under Aliens legislation but more directly handled according to the rules for general immigration established in the 1971 Act. The 1993 Asylum and Immigration Appeals Act incorporated the Geneva Convention into UK law but also introduced the category of 'claims without foundation' pre-empting the full hearing of a case and thus was considered against the principles of the Convention. This was quickly followed by the 1996 Asylum and Immigration Act. Financial support for applicants was removed in numerous categories, including those not applying for asylum immediately on arrival to the UK. In Country appeal rights were limited, meaning that individuals with a recognised right of appeal could be removed to a third country while they pursued that appeal, and it was made a criminal offence to employ anyone without the right to work in the UK. This meant that employers were given a key role in the control of migrants' access to the labour market.

## 1.2 Immigration and Asylum Legislation under New Labour

The Labour Government's period in office within the field of immigration was characterised by legislative activism. In 13 years in charge there were six immigration related Acts of Parliament, with another planned at the point in which they lost the 2010 general election, and these were accompanied by a raft of secondary legislation and rule changes. Their first primary Act was the 1999 Immigration and Asylum Act. This represented a major overhaul of the immigration system as it related to asylum seekers. Support provision was split off from the general social security system with the establishment of the National Asylum Support System (NASS). Support was paid at 70 per cent of income support levels and was accompanied by the no-choice dispersal of applicants, meaning they could be sent to and housed in one of many areas throughout the country that had agreed to take part in the scheme. In addition, vouchers rather than cash payments were made and could only be exchanged for goods at certain shops and on a no-change basis. Appeals were restricted and were accompanied by a large increase in the detention

estate, meaning that an increasing number of applicants could be held in secure centres. The prevention of arrival was also key to the Act and its accompanying provisions whereby the white list of allegedly safe countries was accepted, despite Labour's opposition to it prior to the election (House Of Commons 1999). The list referred to countries whose nationals in general are considered not to be at threat of persecution. This was accompanied by safe third country procedures that allowed the removal of applicants to a country other than their country of origin. Thus, the first time asylum appeared in UK domestic law was in order to restrict access to it (Schuster and Solomos 1999).

As far as issues of nationality and citizenship were concerned there was relatively little in the 1999 Act. However, what was included was significant. The Government cited international obligations as the reason for a temporal liberalisation of refugee settlement. Essentially rules were changed to allow those with leave to remain to be entitled to apply for settlement after four rather than seven years. The Government also changed settlement rules to allow immediate settlement on the granting of refugee status. There was also a commitment to reduce the length of time for the processing of applications for citizenship more generally.

Just two years after the implementation of the 1999 Immigration and Asylum Act the Government instituted a new piece of legislation that further tightened the asylum control regime. Although vouchers were abolished in the 2002 Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act, the quid pro quo was that asylum seekers would have to carry the Asylum Registration Card (ARC) in order to obtain payments from the post office. This card was essentially the first compulsory ID card in the UK.

Simultaneously rules were changed regarding the employment concession, which had allowed asylum seekers to apply for the right to work. This was removed, meaning all asylum seekers were forced to rely on NASS support during the length of their claim. The prevention of arrival was furthered by the use of juxtaposed controls, allowing UK immigration officers to carry out their duties in France, and the extension of the white list, making it increasingly difficult for asylum seekers to reach the UK where they could then make a claim.

Several other changes were also introduced as a result of the 2002 Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act. With regard to nationality, applicants for citizenship were to be required to pass an English language test, followed by citizenship ceremonies and the swearing of an oath of allegiance to the crown. The Home Secretary would also be given the power to remove citizenship from people deemed to have done anything against the interests of the country, a concept only loosely defined. The subsidiary status was changed and tightened up, meaning that fewer people would qualify and it was restricted to three rather than the previous four years. The increased focus on nationality, alongside asylum legislation, was at least in part prompted by the disturbances in Burnley and Oldham in the summer of 2001. The Home Office (2002) characterised this as a sign of 'fractured and divided communities' that required a common set of values to overcome, values assumed to be enshrined within British citizenship. Thus knowledge of Life in the UK was also to become a prerequisite for citizenship.

The next Immigration Act's aims were less expansive than most of those that both preceded and followed it. The aim of the Asylum and Immigration (Treatment of Claimants) Act 2004 was to 'deal with' both applicants who did not have any documents and those who delay their removal by lodging appeals. Nevertheless the Government, through Home Secretary David Blunkett, also talked of the disintegration of community relations (David Blunkett in Daily Telegraph, November 14, 2003). This was in the context of his concern with Britishness and more particularly its perceived decline. Indeed Blunkett talked of his journey from scepticism about nationalism to a belief in the need for British nationalism (Channel 5, May 14, 2007). Nevertheless the main elements of the Act concerned further restrictions on asylum support provision, a narrowing of appeal rights and the emergence of the key concept of credibility. This meant that having false documents, no documents or not answering all questions at the first interview was taken as affecting the overall credibility of the asylum claim.

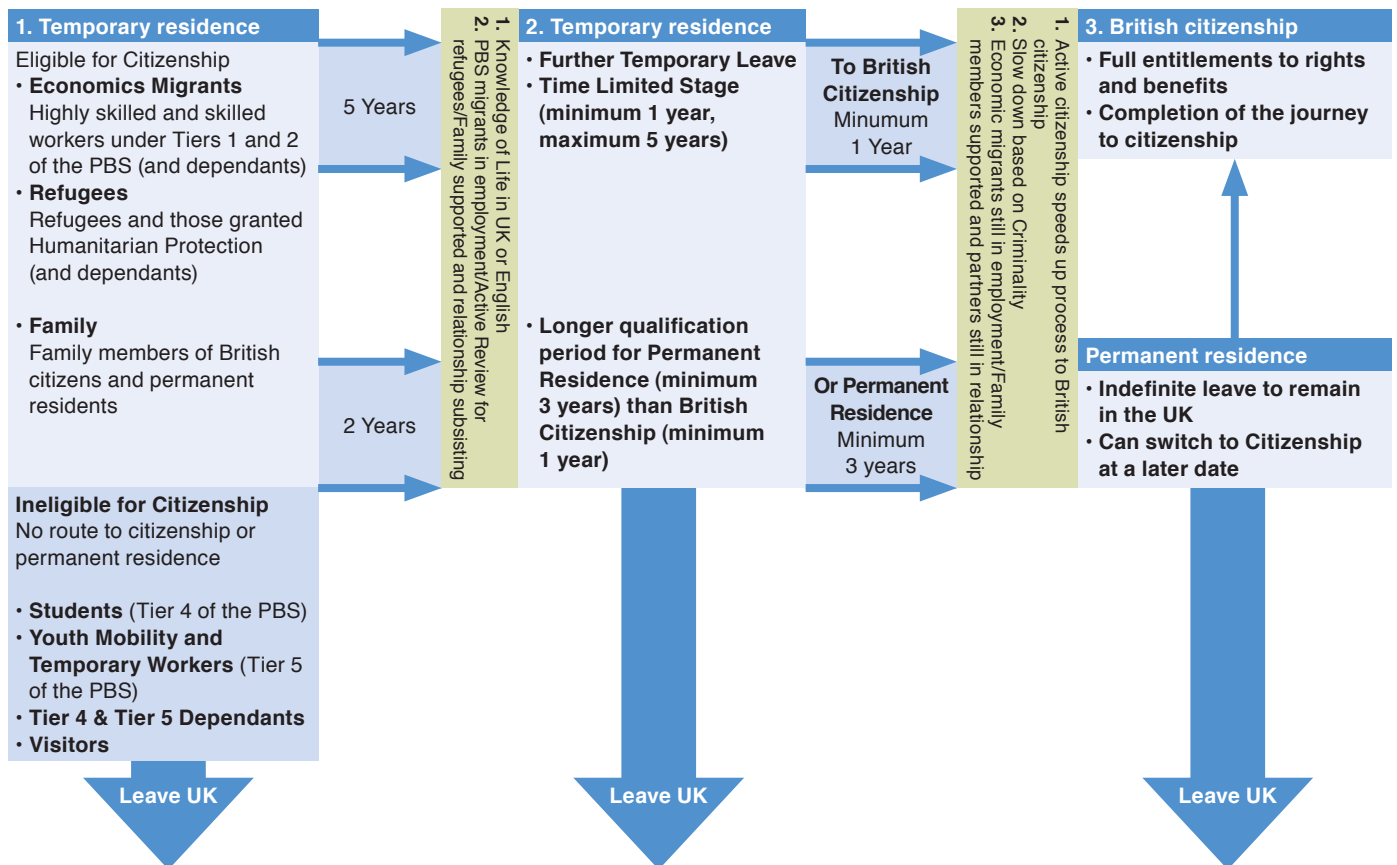
One of the key developments at this time was the move from permanent refugee status to a temporary one, the so called 'cessation clause'<sup>3</sup>. This meant that refugee status was only granted for five years, rather than the permanent status that had existed until then. Although there were few indications given as to what would happen after that five year period, the suggestion was that country information would be kept under review and that this would impact upon what happened at the end of that temporary period. There was also an end of bridging payments for new refugees. Asylum seekers were paid their NASS support at levels 30% below income support and until this period that shortfall was given as a lump sum to people on obtaining refugee status. This was removed and replaced by an integration loan. Of importance to integration was the removal of free English language classes for asylum seekers in England, although the Scottish situation was different as such classes were maintained, highlighting the Scottish Government's perspective that integration begins on the day of arrival rather than on the day refugee status is obtained, as is the case in England. One of the rationales for all of this is seen in the Five Year strategy which stated "long term settlement must be carefully controlled and provide long term economic benefit" (Home Office 2005, 21).

The Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Act, passed in 2009, constructed a new 'pathways to citizenship' architecture. This created a period of probationary citizenship which can be reduced if candidates undertake voluntary work in the form of 'active citizenship'. Figure one provides a diagrammatic representation of the path to citizenship at the time of writing. The Immigration Minister Phil Woolas added that engagement in anything that offends 'British values' or individuals who 'fail to integrate' can be denied citizenship. Thus the process of obtaining citizenship would be elongated and would also have behavioural requirements added to it. This was all done within the rubric of the Government seeking the promotion of 'active citizenship'. This was a concept that began to receive Government attention after the disturbances in Burnley, Oldham and Bradford

<sup>3</sup> The Refugee Convention explicitly allows for the cessation of refugees' status if one of a number of factors has emerged. For the purposes of this paper, it is the changes in the individual's country of origin that are of relevance. However, the UK until 2005 operated on the assumption of permanent refugee status.

in 2001. This involved the search for communal values with active citizenship forming a key plank in this communalism. The encouragement of volunteering was one key aspect of this, as was Labour’s activation policies, which defined citizens as more or less productive units of labour (see Scott 2006). Jurado (2008) points to the contrasting ways the concept of active citizenship have been

used. Whereas in the UK “active citizenship’ is a requirement for immigrants to progress from ‘probationary’ to ‘full’ citizenship, the European Commission coined the term to encourage EU member states that have restrictive citizenship policies to promote integration by extending political rights, among other entitlements, to third country long-term residents” (Jurado 2008, 12).



The draft Immigration Bill of 2010 was not passed prior to the replacement of the Labour Government by the Conservative/Liberal Democrat coalition. This Act sought to bring all relevant pieces of immigration legislation under one Act as a means of simplifying immigration law. In addition to the proposals in the Act, the Government also suggested a move towards points based citizenship, reflecting the move towards points based immigration policy.

Figure one: The new system – entry to UK citizenship (Home Office 2008)

### 1.3 Volunteering

One area of interest to this research project that does not yet relate directly to citizenship issues is that of volunteering. One of the outgoing Labour Government's proposals for citizenship policy was that it would be probationary. In essence, paths to citizenship would be delayed and dependent on the behaviour of applicants (see phase two of figure one). The suggestion was that volunteering would be one such behaviour that would enable the process to be accelerated. However, it seems likely that the new Government will not seek to further such proposals, at least if their views while in opposition are reflected in Government positions. As Shadow Immigration Minister Damian Green stated this amounted to blackmail with regard to volunteering and was "perhaps the ultimate absurdity" (Harper and Symonds 2009). Nevertheless there are important points to be made regarding the intersection between volunteering and sense of belonging.

Volunteering remains important as part of the Government's 'Big Society', and in relation to previous work on citizenship. The importance and impact of volunteering is addressed by Levesley (2008) in his work for Lord Goldsmith's inquiry on citizenship. In his work all respondents reported 'altruistic' benefits of volunteering. It made people feel good about themselves and provided a mechanism where they could 'give something

back'. In addition, confidence and skills were seen as benefiting from such activity. However, the linking of volunteering with citizenship was less well received. Many respondents argued that any sense of coercion or status reward for volunteering undermined the very concept of being a volunteer. As quoted, "people would do it if they had to but it might create a more grudging voluntary workforce, rather than one interested in helping others" (Levesley 2008, 25). Furthermore, Heath and Roberts (2008) found no relationship between sense of belonging and identity with Britain and volunteering and participation in voluntary associations. Indeed, the whole concept of citizenship acquisition being used as a means of encouragement to active citizenship had little or no evidence. Interestingly, the 2009 citizenship survey found that the proportion of the British adult population formally volunteering had dropped from 44 per cent in 2005 to 41 per cent in 2008/9 (Cohesion Research Statistical Release 1999). Informal volunteering was higher, however, although it too had fallen from 68 per cent in 2005 to 64 per cent in 2008/9. The survey also found that there had been a drop in the percentage of people feeling that they strongly belonged to Britain, falling from 86 per cent in 2005 to 84 per cent in 2008/9. These figures point to potential challenges in enforcing volunteering on a practical level and the complex relationship with sense of belonging.

### 2.1 Theories of Citizenship

A plethora of adjectives are evident in the literature to describe different forms of citizenship (Kivisto and Faist 2007) including but not limited to global, universal, multiple, cosmopolitan, postnational, dual, transnational, cultural, multicultural, environmental and gendered. Citizenship is normally defined as the rights and obligations that individuals accrue as full members of a community, usually taken as being the nation state. It is thus viewed as the attribution of entitlements and duties as a legal status but also represents the incorporation of an individual or individuals into a society. Citizenship in a state is an institutionalized form of solidarity. It is an expression of full and formal membership and a series of reciprocal transactions between the citizen and state (Faist 2000). Citizenship has been defined along two lines: social and political citizenship; and citizenship and nationality (Kofman 1995).

First, citizenship defined in terms of political and social rights emphasises the shared values of a supposedly homogeneous political community, with consolidation of citizenship and solidarity through the extension of social rights. In his seminal work on citizenship, TH Marshall (1963) defined the political and social elements of citizenship by tracing the historical development of rights in England from the eighteenth to the twentieth century. The Marshallian conception of citizenship views the state as conferring three sets of rights on citizens; political, social and civic. All three types of rights are required for full membership of the polity. Developed in the eighteenth century, civil rights included liberty, freedom of speech/thought/faith, the right to own property and the right to justice. This was followed in the nineteenth century by political rights, namely the right to participate in the exercise of political power. Finally, social rights were developed in the twentieth century and included the right to economic welfare and security, the educational system and social services. It is implied in this model that membership is twofold. There is membership of the state as a political community and membership of the nation as a cultural community (Gustafson 2002). Community membership is based upon loyalty to a civilisation

and “its growth is stimulated both by the struggle to win those rights and by their enjoyment when won” (Marshall 1963, 92). Marshall thus regarded citizenship as an instrument of social stratification in that there is “an image of an ideal citizenship against which achievement can be measured and towards which aspiration can be directed” (Marshall 1963, 84).

Second, citizenship has been strongly linked with the evolution of Westphalian nation states, nationality and the connections of the polity within a specified geographical territory. Citizenship is defined by and “rests upon the construction of an identity, complete with a related package of known rights and obligations, which posits residence in a definable place or .. territory” (Painter and Philo 1995, 111). Nevertheless, “the bounded space of citizenship becomes one that cannot be straightforward inclusionary because some of the people resident within the territorial limits are not properly regarded as being ‘like us’ who are fashioned out of the same historical, cultural, ethnic, linguistic or even religious materials” (Painter and Philo 1995, 112). The Athenian model of citizenship, in which people made themselves into a citizenry by establishing a rule of law to defend themselves within and without, was the first formulation of legal rights of citizenship known as *jus sanguinis*. Citizenship in *jus sanguinis* is defined as a community of descent, or blood links, which indicates lineage and cultural affiliations. Therefore who gets defined as a ‘true’ citizen is not merely defined by geographical boundaries but depends on who carries with them the “correct baggage of history, culture, ethnicity, language and religion” (Painter and Philo 1995, 113). Citizenship is therefore reserved for members of the nation, whose boundaries do not necessarily coexist with the state. This was expanded by Rome as it developed a form of citizenship which included people of diverse cultural origins. Roman citizenship meant membership in a political community based upon legally defined rights and duties, and it could be conferred on anyone whatever his origin, a step forward from Greek polis (Castles and Davidson 2000).

Moving forward in time, in Natal in 1897, Act 145 was introduced which imposed two tests of citizenship, the first related to property and the second was an education test focusing upon language ability (Cole 2010). But as the “Natal formula shows, it is clearly possible to devise admissions criteria that make no explicit reference to race or national origin, but still work to exclude certain racial and national groups” (Cole 2010, 12). Indeed, the intertwining of racial logic and access to citizenship has been evidenced in many national contexts (Lentin 2007; Ong 2003). Exclusion on the basis of ethnicity and religion has been central to the construction of British national identity and the rights enjoyed by British citizens (Sales 2005). As previously mentioned, the 1981 British Nationality Act changed access to citizenship by effectively abolishing *jus soli* (citizenship by birth on British soil) and promulgated *jus sanguinis* whereby citizenship became a matter of descent. This means that three key forms of citizenship can be differentiated including *jus sanguinis* – law of blood (national descent), *jus soli* – law of soil (birth in territory) and *jus domicile* – law of residence (residence in territory).

In linking to the ways in which citizenship is defined above, Faist (2000) argues that access to citizenship for newcomers exists across two axes. First there is vertical access to citizenship which is legal-constitutional and political-institutional. The second is horizontal access which includes reciprocal state-citizen ties and the public recognition of these ties (belonging). In order for immigrants to become citizens, most countries have set out conditions that individuals must meet such as length of residence, work history, no criminal record and proficiency in the dominant language. These constitute the legal and constitutional standards set down as a means to determine who accesses citizenship. Equally, citizens must reciprocate ties and demonstrate belonging. Nonetheless, it is notable that the norms of good citizenship have recently shifted from an emphasis not only on duties and obligations, but to responsible choice-making subjects that can serve the nation, thus “the most worthy citizen is a flexible

*homo economicus*” (Ong 2003, 9). Citizens are thus increasingly assessed upon their human capital, with the civic duty of each individual to contribute to society and reduce their burden on society. Western conceptions of citizenship are thus dominated by individualistic notions, leading to tensions with the more communitarian conceptions of citizenship. The latter stresses the duties or responsibilities of the individual to the collective and the need to act as good citizens (Ip et al 1997).

## 2.2 Globalisation, Transnationalism and Citizenship

The Marshallian view of citizenship can perhaps be regarded as a theory from a bygone age. The Goldsmith (2008) review of citizenship, for example, highlights that the responsibilities of the state in relation to what it owes its citizens has expanded over the decades. Furthermore, globalisation has challenged the parameters, meanings and discourses of citizenship. The relative fluidity of international mobility means that individuals can have numerous identities that are not necessary bound up within conceptions of citizenship. The challenges facing the nation state model in the light of globalisation has led to citizenship being questioned and reshaped by global transformations (Castles and Davidson 2000). The ideology of distinct and autonomous national cultures has been undermined due to the rapid mobility of people across national borders. This has led to attempts to rethink theories of citizenship, with the subsequent emergence of notions of cosmopolitan, multi-cultural and post-national citizenship.

Theories of post-national citizenship (Soysal 1994) signal a shift from a model of national citizenship to postnational membership, predicated on notions of universal personhood rather than national belonging. It is argued that liberal democratic nation states increasingly respect the human rights of persons irrespective of citizenship status, with these rights governed by universal discourses embedded in international agreements. Soysal’s (1994) analysis of guestworker experiences across the European Union suggests that citizenship is not a significant factor in determining eligibility

for social services and permanent residency is not always a requirement for social services such as housing, benefits and cash assistance. Non-citizens can therefore be entitled to full civil rights and obliged to perform the most basic of duties such as being lawful, respect other people's rights/property and the education of children. Migrants thus enjoy protection from an international regime, with social rights no longer dependent on citizenship but derived from territorial residence. It is suggested that these changes point to the "decreasing importance of formal citizenship status in determining the rights and privileges of migrants in host polities" (Soysal 1994, 132). As international conventions and charters ascribe universal rights to persons regardless of their membership status in a nation state, the logic of personhood supersedes the logic of national citizenship. This means there is a "reconfiguration of citizenship from a more particularistic one based on nationhood to a more universalistic one based on personhood" (Soysal 1994, 137). The boundaries of membership are fluid with the crucial determinant being residence rather than citizenship.

Nevertheless, although post-national theories argue that the source and legitimacy of rights is increasingly located in the transnational order, individual rights are still organised differentially within countries and this bears an imprint of polity specific forms of membership. For example, in relation to non European Union or third country migrants in the European Union, Kofman (2002) argues that along with an absence of political rights, many individuals do not enjoy full civil and economic rights. Furthermore, although claims to rights become universalized and abstract, identity is still conceived of being bounded by national, ethnic or regional characteristics. This has led to increasing debates over the incorporation of groups to national polities and the levels of adjustment and cultural otherness (Kofman 1995). This highlights the recognition that political citizenship does not necessarily lead to equality, which has led to calls for a remaking of identities through multi-cultural citizenship (Kymlicka and Norman 2000).

Perhaps more useful in the discussion of citizenship and migrant groups (including refugees) then, is the concept of transnational citizenship. Transnationalism has challenged the relationship between citizenship and place based identities in highlighting the incompatibility of modern migratory movements with traditional forms of citizenship that involves loyalty and identification with one country (see Section 1.1 on British policy's confusion over subject-hood, nationality and citizenship). Transnational citizenship perspectives view individuals as being legitimate political and social actors in more than one nation state (Glick Schiller 2009). Building upon concepts of immigrant adaptation and citizenship that have identified multicultural citizenship and dual state membership (Faist 2000), transnational citizenship encapsulates the deep social, economic and emotional ties that immigrants can maintain with their countries of origin, even after the acquisition of citizenship in another nation state. Ehrkamp and Leitner (2006) point out that migrants can operate in 'multiple communities', and are thus not only, or even primarily, anchored in one national collectivity. These transnational ties do not dissolve territorial identities and allegiances but reconfigure political identities and attachments. There is a 'polyvalence' of identities that indicates an individual's identification with their place of origin and settlement (Ehrkamp and Leitner 2006). For example, refugees who live outside of their country of origin may still maintain strong transnational linkages (Al-Ali et al 2001). It is about belonging and recognition whilst acknowledging the symbolic ties that reach back to the country of origin. This takes into account that the adaptation of refugees does not occur solely within the nation state context but that loyalties and ties can co-exist with multiple places. And this confirms the need to move away from a spatially rigid conception of citizenship towards a flexible, geographically hybrid identity (Waters 2003).



Nevertheless, in a globalising world dual state membership may be seen to hinder immigrant adaptation and integration in a new country and lead to divided loyalties amongst immigrants. There is concern that this may reduce nationality to holding a passport, with a subsequent devaluation of citizenship (Faist 2000). Amongst highly skilled immigrants there is evidence of citizenship being adopted strategically by some families. In these instances “the acquisition of citizenship apparently had very little bearing on their daily practices and sense of identification and belonging” (Waters 2009, 638). This means that citizenship is no longer regarded as an important step to integration or inclusion within the host country but rather citizenship can be strategically accumulated. The term ‘instrumental citizenship’ has been employed to encapsulate the acquisition of citizenship by groups who are devoid of meaningful integration and settlement beyond the acquisition of a secure, legal status (Ip et al 1997). Nevertheless, in challenging the notion of flexible citizenship, Waters research (2003; 2009) discovered that the everyday experiences of migrants “were apparently inconsistent with instrumental intentions of immigration and citizenship acquisition as they actively pursued increasing involvement in and integration with their local communities” (Waters 2003, 232). So by merely focusing upon the acquisition of citizenships status, this fails to recognise the potentially high levels of local civic involvement and localised sense of identity in the new country, with evidence of participating and active citizens with high degrees of fixity. This suggests that “transnationalism and local engagement can coexist” (Waters 2009, 642) with lived experiences impacting upon previously decided strategies.

### 2.3 Citizenship Legislation in the UK

Morrell (2008) provides a chronological analysis of not only policy and practice with regard to British citizenship, but also the ideological underpinnings of such processes. He highlights the work of Ceserani in describing British citizenship as having a somewhat ‘patchwork history’. He argues that the lack of formal anchoring of UK citizenship has led to what Ceserani refers to as a citizenship that

is ‘vulnerable to the instability of change’ (cited in Morrell 2009, 12). Furthermore, Hansen (2001, 69) talks of the gradual emergence of British citizenship, an emergence from ‘subjecthood’, and adds that it is “the story of a gradual but ultimate merging of nationality and territory”. He highlights a long history of this merging policy, from imperial conceptions to narrower territorial ones but also based on the gradual amalgam of four separate nations.

In his review of citizenship, Lord Goldsmith (2008, 10) points to the role of citizenship in Britain, defining this as a “statement of a reciprocal relationship under which the individual offers loyalty in exchange for protection”. Social bonds raised by Lord Goldsmith are linked to Goodhart’s notion of solidarity. Goldsmith (2008) points out that the social bonds of citizenship become deeper as time goes on. He adds that such responsibilities are far wider than they were in the past, when protection was the primary duty owed by the state. We are now required to treat others fairly and have a social safety net as part of the State’s responsibility. Nevertheless, he highlights the lack of coherence in terms of British citizenship and nationality policy, which is of particular relevance to refugee populations. Only full citizens have an absolute right to abode and those with Indefinite Leave to Remain (ILR) are considered ‘settled’, a less secure status than citizen.

Present day processes have had to respond to both large scale immigration and the dissolution of empire. Post war UK citizenship policies were not designed to integrate immigrants but to keep them out. Along with the emerging race relations legislation, what developed was an architecture that was both externally exclusive and internally inclusive. The result has been a form of nation-building whereby “British citizenship has often been used as a political tool rather than a mechanism for social unity” (Morrell 2008, 18). The parameters and purpose of citizenship have evolved to one whereby ‘rights and responsibilities’ have now become the primary consideration of citizenship, with territorial coverage being key to membership access. This forms the philosophical binary of debates whereby republican/cosmopolitan, liberal/democratic and communitarian/libertarian confront one another.

For Morrell (2008), the last of these dichotomous debates dominates the UK agenda. In policy terms the trajectory of citizenship legislation in the UK has tended to emphasise the 'earning' of citizenship amongst newcomers rather than a more general focus on strengthening the 'bond' of citizenship. Citizenship is therefore a reward rather than a tool of integration.

Jurado (2008) points out that the recent focus on citizenship emerged from a now widespread perception that multiculturalism has failed. Recent concerns over social cohesion amongst communities in UK, the perception of communities living parallel lives (Cantle 2005) and concerns about terrorism have led to a somewhat ambiguous Government response. Multicultural policies, which aimed to promote respect and understanding for diverse cultures, have been critiqued for not facilitating the creation of shared values. In his work, Goodhart (2006, 17) argues that "the modern nation state is based not on a universalist liberalism but on a contractual idea of club membership". He thus argues that diversity represented by multiculturalism is incompatible with social solidarity and that all members of the club must have certain types of uniformities. Indeed, the UK Government's concerns over how identity, culture and tradition may hinder integration as well as the legacy of failed integration policies and lack of community cohesion amongst Asian populations are said to have "bled into the citizenship strategies for 'new' migrants that are now under way in Asylum and Immigration policy" (McGhee 2005, 3).

The UK Government has sought to include and integrate certain migrants by making them 'less different', a nod to historic assimilationist approaches rather than the multi-cultural model developed since the 1960's (Vasta 2009). Kofman (2002) has argued that citizenship classes and tests are indicative of a move away from multiculturalism and towards a more assimilationist approach to integration. Potential citizens are required to learn the values and culture of an 'imagined community' (Anderson 1991) prior to being bestowed citizenship, which is seen as a form of nation-building. The Government has implemented citizenship ceremonies in order to celebrate

British citizenship. The Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 also includes a citizenship pledge in which individuals swear an Oath of Allegiance to the Crown. These developments in UK citizenship legislation represent a strategy that de-emphasises 'past orientated attachments' (e.g. tradition, culture and identity) towards promoting 'future orientated allegiances' (e.g. through civic engagement, political participation and loyalty to the wider British polity) (McGhee 2005). This includes a shift from the promotion of civic nationalism that emphasised participation towards civic nationalism which emphasises loyalty, shared values and responsibilities (McGhee 2009).

Overall, the desire is for individuals to become British citizens at a deeper level, in order to reduce the possibility of future internal discontent emerging in settled immigrant communities. Indeed, these new immigration and naturalisation policy reforms are legitimised on the basis of alleged non-integration of settled ethnic and religious immigrant communities and the threat from seemingly integrated 'home-grown' extremists arising from within settled minority communities (McGhee 2009). Additionally, Morrell (2008, 27) implies that aspects of citizenship have been securitised when stating "concern with security has often permeated immigration and asylum policy and citizenship policies in a way that may not square with the goal of providing a shared ground for diverse communities, when citizenship and its quasi alternatives can act as an additional marker of difference".

Citizenship legislation being used as a tool for the integration of minorities is therefore evidenced in the UK. Nonetheless, by placing concerns about language at the centre of debates about citizenship, there have also been signs of citizenship moving towards the reward model (Jurado 2008). Indeed, the previous Government's plans for probationary citizenship and integration requirements would have taken this reward aspect one step further. The 'Path to Citizenship' alluded to the reward model as it explicitly stated that citizenship was a means of integration (Jurado 2008). Nonetheless, "this positive message about the role of citizenship in the integration process does not fit easily with the main

thrust of the green paper, which aims to increase the number of hoops that immigrants should jump through in order to become full British citizens” (Jurado 2008, 10). Thus as far as Government policies have been concerned there have been ‘two competing impulses’ in citizenship processes. To summarise:

*“The British government’s current green paper draws confusingly from both models, claiming, on the one hand, to be introducing greater incentives for immigrants to progress towards citizenship ‘so that they can become fully integrated into our society’ while, on the other hand, referring to citizenship as a status that immigrants need to “earn” by fulfilling a series of prior “integration requirements” (Jurado 2008, 16).*

Dwyer (1998) has argued that the Labour Government’s perspective on active citizenship has shifted emphasis within the social contract. In essence that shift has been from one whereby social citizenship and rights are emphasised to one whereby individual responsibility is prioritised. This approach has extended to viewing inequalities as socially rather than politically and economically constructed. Thus migrants are responsible not only for cohesion problems, but also for their own inequalities. This is also linked to the previous Government’s proposals for ‘earned citizenship’, which, Jurado (2008, 4) points out, “would see the introduction of further integration requirements ahead of citizenship”. This means that although citizenship legislation in the UK locates the essence of ‘Britishness’ in universalist notions of human rights and democratic values it nevertheless excludes people on the basis of place of birth (European Union citizens), their social class (possession of skills) or meeting the narrow definition of a refugee (Sales 2005). Immigration policy “rather than becoming ‘deracialized’, is creating complex shifts in the processes of racialization and consequent exclusion” (Sales 2005, 458). Furthermore, what this citizenship legislation fails to recognise is Etzioni’s observation that “individuals abide by and are committed to a set of core values because they believe in them rather than because they are forced to comply with them” (McGhee 2009, 91).

## 2.4 Britishness, Citizenship and Belonging

Britishness was presented by the previous Labour Government as providing a set of unifying values for the country<sup>4</sup>. However, the notion of Britishness is difficult to define, its meanings are contested (Sales 2010) and what constitutes Britishness is therefore somewhat opaque. The structure of Britain, involving four disparate nations within one nation state, means that the search for a unifying identity involves the creation rather than discovery of a British identity (see former Home Office Minister and Chair of the Home Affairs Select Committee John Denham in Goodhart (2006). It has been said that “it is a good idea in theory to promote a stronger sense of national citizenship but in practice it is pointless because there is too little agreement about what Britishness means” (Goodhart 2006, 28). Despite such disagreements, the Labour Government placed greater emphasis on Britishness.

Whilst legalism has been dominant in conceptions of British citizenship (Dell’olio 2002), there has been a shift towards regarding citizenship as a ‘social practice’ that sees individuals engaging ‘beyond the state’ through civil society (Ehrkamp and Leitner 2006). And this shift is regarded as a key tool employed by the UK Government to promote loyalty to the nation state through contractual obligations in citizenship legislation. In particular Morrell (2008, 26) refers to Gordon Brown’s attempt to “re-imagine and reawaken Britishness as a way of unifying society”. For Brown, Britishness appeared to mean more than citizenship. It was a source of cultural identity rather than just a civil and political framework. The focus on culture, however, contrasts with the traditional function of Britishness. Morrell (2008) points out that Britishness is a political rather than cultural identity. Identity in this sense is not possessed, but is expressed. This mixture of political construction and identity expression requires the creation of symbols as a unifying force, used in a way to create an imagined community (see Anderson 1991).

<sup>4</sup> See for example Gordon Brown’s suggestion of a national celebration of British identity.

Part of the new concern with Britishness results from evidence of a decline in the proportion of the population identifying with Britain (see for example Stone and Muir 2007; Sales 2010; McCrone and Bechhofer 2008; Heath and Roberts 2008; Fenton 2007). However, this assumed decline of Britishness, while mourned in England, is seen as allowing for the flourishing of Scottish and Welsh identity. As explained, “non-white Scottish and Welsh people hold a similar opinion to their white compatriots: Britain is associated with the oppression and racial hierarchy of the Empire and so Britishness is not something they wish to identify with” (Morrell 2008, 33). Symbols and myths combine with history to create different conceptions of Britishness. Morrell (2008) therefore suggests that Britishness may not be the correct term for the desired form of citizenship, as that would prevent many from seeking to obtain or identify with it. Not only can citizenship tied to Britishness be exclusive in terms of identity, Parekh (2008, 35) argues that it is often “inherently vague, and can be easily used to disqualify any group that appears to show insufficient Britishness”. Thus, a focus on citizenship may militate against inclusion and integration.

As such, there is not necessarily a direct connection between British identity and citizenship. As part of the Goldsmith review of citizenship, Levesley’s work (2008) found a strong feeling of Britishness among migrant groups who had become citizens, although defining oneself as British was seen as being different to feeling British. That is, citizenship provides for a political identification with the nation state, but this does not necessarily lead to feelings of belonging to that nation state. Levesley (2008) found that for those feeling British, such feelings had a temporal dimension and only arose after a period of time living here. As discussed, “some said they felt more British after acquiring citizenship, but most of the emotional attachment to Britain coincided with making decisions about future life in Britain” (Ibid, 22). There were also those who identified changing rules as a driver to citizenship. The acquisition of British citizenship was related to having an identity and passport that nobody could take away. What is more, obtaining citizenship did not signify an attachment to Britain, rather the

decision to become British had already done so. This confirms that citizenship is more than simply being the holder of a passport. A passport is a sign of nationality but analytically there should be a distinction between nationality and citizenship (Kivisto and Faist 2007).

As well as this distinction between citizenship, identity and belonging, Heath and Roberts (2008) highlight differences between national pride and sense of belonging. National pride relates to a country’s external achievements while belonging or attachment is about how members of society relate to one another. They point out that the difference between British citizenship and British identity is the unofficial nature of identity, whereas citizenship is a documented and official status. Socio-economic exclusion is also seen as affecting attachment to the nation state in Heath and Roberts’ (2008) work. Although the differences are not statistically significant, there appears to be some impact whereby those in the lowest quintile of family income, people with limiting long term health problems, those in rented accommodation, and those with no access to a car have a weaker sense of belonging to Britain. An issue not addressed in this research is the fact that migrant communities, as well as long term settled BME communities, are over-represented within these categories. Although Heath and Roberts (2008) point to the lack of evidence that would allow policy recommendations to emerge from their work, they do argue that there is a need for policy to address the weak sense of belonging among people born overseas in non-Commonwealth countries, of second generation migrants, and of the economically marginal. Indeed, more recent research has found that Britishness is not regarded as an identity for some groups (British-born Asian young men) but as a source of rights, signifying legalistic perceptions. Thus Britishness is seen as a racialised identity, whereas citizenship as an identity is not (Sales 2010).

As discussed earlier, the relationship between citizenship and integration can be regarded in two main ways. Citizenship can either be seen as a tool in facilitating integration, or alternatively citizenship is presented as a reward for integration (Jurado 2008). Which of these dominates has a major impact on the temporal aspects of the granting of citizenship. Jurado (2008) argues that up until the 1980's British citizenship was used as a tool for integration. This was reflected in the multicultural model of integration being espoused during this time. The model was then challenged by a number of reports that suggested poor levels of integration, reflected in low levels of ethnic minority participation in politics. As explained, "the same British governments that facilitated access to citizenship gave insufficient attention to the institutional and structural barriers that hindered the effective exercise of political citizenship rights by Britain's minority ethnic populations" (Jurado 2008, 9). Thus citizenship as a legal status assumed equality and integration and any subsequent lack of equality and integration questioned the direct link between citizenship acquisition and integration.

Indeed, citizenship does not diminish inequality, and does not necessarily lead to equality of income or condition (Powell 2009). And resulting inequalities mean that acquiring citizenship is not necessarily sufficient for individuals to identify with a country (Ip et al 1997). Even if individuals pass the hurdles required for citizenship they may still feel quite alienated in the society in which they are now regarded as a legal member. Conversely, "an active, constructive involvement in public affairs ... is by no means simply dependent on one's possession of a passport, or even voting rights" (Calder and Seglow 2010, 156). This means the UK passport is not a passport to social rights, as some rights are of denizenship rather than citizenship (Powell 2009). As a result, it has been suggested that facilitating access to citizenship without commitments to anti-discrimination legislation aimed at institutional and everyday racist practices will produce second class citizenship (Kofman 1995). Indeed, if individuals cannot occupy public spaces without feeling uncomfortable, victimized or 'out of place' then "it must be questionable whether or not these people

can be regarded as citizens at all or ... whether they will regard themselves as full citizens of their host community" (Painter and Philo 1995, 115). There is a need to move beyond solely focusing upon the vertical, legal axis of citizenship towards the horizontal ties forged by immigrant groups. As explained, "it is in the space of encounter and enmeshment – in the practices directed at newcomers, and the mutual daily interactions that ensue – that the meaning and exercise of citizenship happen" (Ong 2003, 16). This means that it is the everyday practices and experiences that make citizens as opposed to one-off, legalistic gestures (such as being given a passport).

## 2.5 Refugees and Citizenship

Prior to outlining the existing literature on refugees and citizenship, it is worth highlighting what international law states with regard to this matter. Hathaway (2005) begins to address this by pointing out that local integration is a normalised aspect of the refugee condition. This "means in essence that a refugee is granted some form of durable legal status that allows him or her to remain in the country of first asylum on an indefinite basis" (Hathaway 2005, 977). He continues that rights are at the core of this, with the local integration and rights enjoyed by Geneva Convention refugees "on par with those enjoyed by others in the host state community" (Ibid, 979). However, Hathaway (2005) goes on to examine the process of moving beyond refugee status and towards the acquisition of citizenship. Whilst the Geneva Convention upholds the rights of states to restrict the political rights of 'aliens', Article 34 posits that a refugee required to remain outside their country of origin should at some point benefit from "a series of privileges, including political rights" (UNHCR quoted in Hathaway 2005, 981). Although this article is not a 'strong obligation', the suggestion of the Convention is that states should as far as possible facilitate the assimilation and naturalisation of refugees. The Convention also appeals to states to expedite these procedures for refugees, and suggests that fees associated with citizenship are reduced as far as possible. Thus overall the Convention seeks to promote rather than compel naturalisation.

Refugees challenge the notion of citizenship rights that have been built upon the territorial boundaries of the state. Refugees are characterised by Soysal (1994) as effectively stateless persons who are granted rights as individuals, with the basis of their status in host states resting upon an appeal to human rights. When countries admit refugees they are providing them with the basic rights of citizenship. This means that “refugees have a much stronger claim to the citizenship of receiving states when compared to economic migrants, who still retain an element of their citizenship of origin” (Babacan and Babacan 2009, 54). Nonetheless there is still a gap between the norms of international human rights and the actual practices adopted by states towards refugees and asylum seekers. This means that “theoretically, international refugee law sits in tension with nation state citizenship in that it is premised on the citizenship (human) rights of individuals on account of their humanity, rather than their membership or residence in a particular nation state” (Babacan and Babacan 2009, 53). Indeed, despite citizenship being regarded as fundamental to refugee integration (Ager and Strang 2008) there is a growing trend towards nation states curtailing citizenship rights of vulnerable groups like refugees and asylum seekers. As explained, “while international refugee law seeks to grant protection and rights to refugees, the notion of state sovereignty and its link to democratic citizenship and migration continues to be used as a tool for governments wishing to exclude refugees and asylum seekers” (Babacan and Babacan 2009, 61). This has led to differential experiences of refugees across the European Union who face different national criteria for gaining nationality and citizenship (Mestheneos and Ioannidi 2002).

For the purposes of this study we were interested in the process of refugees becoming citizens. To begin, therefore, literature which has examined the process of becoming citizens amongst migrant groups can provide valuable lessons in understanding the potential implications for refugee groups. Migrants appear to perceive citizenship acquisition as allowing security in the place of

settlement, facilitating transnational practices such as travelling to their country of origin, allowing security to be extended to family members and as a prerequisite for equal access to social and political rights (Ehrkamp and Leitner 2006). This includes a mixture of both instrumental citizenship and citizenship as encompassing equality and belonging. The work of Ehrkamp and Leitner (2006) suggests that although there will be advantages for refugees in becoming citizens, such as employment, receiving pensions, identification with a new country, participation in the political system, the provision of security for stateless people and passports, there are also disadvantages such as forfeiting the automatic right of re-entry or giving up citizenship rights in the country of origin such as owning property or land.

Research on the uptake of Australian citizenship amongst migrant groups found that individual factors can influence the decision as to whether to adopt citizenship or not. These factors include age and time spent in the country (Kelley and McAllister 1982). This research found that the longer that a migrant lived in Australia, the more they had invested there, and so the attractiveness of returning home lessened. Similarly, research with refugees found that when they enjoy civil, social and economic citizenship rights (when compared to what would be expected in the home country) the importance of repatriation diminishes and they are more likely to remain in the country of asylum (Kibreab 2003). Nevertheless, research in the UK has found that refugees may be reluctant to become British citizens because it denies their roots and conflicts with aspirations to return to their homeland (Fyfe and Findlay 2006). Citizenship status and rights can therefore impact upon the return aspirations of refugees and decisions about citizenship. Interestingly, the research in Australia documented that factors which do not influence the decision to become a citizen are country of origin, ethnic group or occupational status.

A survey of refugees in Australia, conducted over thirty years ago found that those who sought naturalisation already had a high level of identification with the country (Martin 1965).

In contrast, other research has argued that because refugees enjoy the majority of rights available to nationals, “once a refugee is granted permanent status, it matters little whether he or she is naturalized” (Kibreab 2003, 48). It is unclear whether the accrual of rights is sufficient for refugees alone or whether other factors influence the decisions of refugees to apply for citizenship (or not) in their respective host countries. In addition, the temporary nature of refugee status in many countries may impact upon the desire to be naturalised. Interviews with immigrants and refugees in Canada and US suggest that views on citizenship held by individuals are related to prevailing national policies (Bloemraad 2006). This Canadian study found that immigrants and refugees in Canada were more likely to naturalise, more likely to organise and more likely to get elected to public office than their American counterparts, suggesting that behaviour may be responsive to policy.

In the UK context there have been three key studies on refugees and citizenship that provide valuable insights into the motivations among refugees to becoming British and their feelings about Britishness. Each is discussed briefly in turn. First, Levesley (2008) points out that refugees are different from other categories of migrants in the sense that they did not choose to come to the UK but circumstances led to their arrival. In terms of attitudes and movement towards citizenship, he found that this was not prioritised among refugees, who saw leave to remain as more immediate and tangible. In a sense Levesley (2008) found a variation of Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs in his work. Refugees, as well as other migrants, prioritised the desire to be safe and the need for housing and food before any other ambitions could begin to be considered. Levesley (2008) also uncovered a number of barriers to applying to be British, although he acknowledges that his sample was not best placed to examine barriers. However, among those that could identify such, the primary barriers were cost and issues around dual citizenship, while secondary barriers concerned loyalty to their nation of birth and issues around the Life in the UK test. Cost was by far the largest

barrier to application. He states “the impact of the scale of the costs ranged from a sense of resentment that immigrants were being exploited to simply suspecting that the country was trying to deter people from making their home here” (Levesley 2008, 35).

This report found that the most important point in encouraging those with ILR to apply for citizenship was on having children. The reasons for this were twofold. They felt that they urgently required stability and there was a feeling that children born here, and therefore seen as British, should have the same nationality as their parents. Levesley (2008) also highlights practical drivers such as travel, the greatest driver, work and emotional benefits in the form of kudos, pride and sense of belonging. Straddling these were family unity, equality and security. The search for permanency was an important dimension to many of these drivers and benefits. Particularly among respondents with ILR there was a feeling of uncertainty which undermined their confidence, or there was a feeling that their status was incompatible with their feelings of belonging. However, importantly, Levesley (2008, 33) points out that “British citizenship, and the passport that symbolised and confirmed it, was permanent, meant freedom from deportation and allowed the individual and his or her family to plan for the long term”.

Second, Morrell’s (2009) research with refugees documents a multitude of reasons and rationales for those seeking citizenship. In his work, some 26 of 34 respondents were already UK citizens, four were awaiting the outcome of their application and two were yet to apply but indicated an intention to do so. A number cited the reason for becoming British as being about opportunities, reflecting a desire to stay in the UK and to obtain all requisite rights, but also an implicit acknowledgement that refugees were denied opportunities. Freedom of movement was an important rationale for many, while other practical reasons for citizenship concerned the ability to obtain work and gain education, with subsequent improvement in earnings. There was also a feeling that being a UK citizen would lead to better treatment in terms of accessing services. Others

saw their lack of ability to return to their country of origin leading them to feel there was no choice but to seek citizenship, a negative rather than positive reason for citizenship acquisition. Others still saw citizenship from more of an incremental perspective, implying a temporal dimension to decision making, that length of time in Britain would gradually impact upon the desire to naturalise. In contrast, others identified emotional reasons for seeking citizenship, such as gratitude for protection received and seeing the UK as home, as the prime rationale. Taking this further, some refugees felt that the opening up of opportunities had led to an increase in their confidence and independence. There was also a split between those refugees who saw obtaining citizenship as forming an emotional break with their country of origin, and those who had made that break prior to becoming citizens.

Morrell (2009) identified a process of 'incremental participation' into UK society amongst refugees. Concentric circles of participation are outlined, whereby an individual's responsibilities begin with themselves before moving out to their family, their own community, UK society more generally and then to their country of origin. It is not suggested that this is necessarily a sequential process. There are numerous factors that impact upon this process, including capital, time, propensity to return and experiences of integration. Indeed the limited resources, both in terms of time and finances, means that the responsibilities refugees feel are often stretched. In summary, Morrell (2009) argues that there are three types of 'refugee-citizen'. There are those that are indifferent who see only practical reasons for citizenship and who experience only practical benefits; the pragmatic who saw practical reasons but who experienced both practical and emotional benefits; and those who envisioned practical and emotional benefits and experienced both.

Thirdly, in another UK study, Rutter et al (2007) found dual identities to be strong among refugees, many of which incorporated a British identity. Some 20 of the 30 interviewees for this study had British passports or were in the process of naturalisation. Many of this group had been long-standing citizens,

and yet a large proportion still identified themselves as being refugees, at least partly due to feelings of rejection by the host society. However, there were also a number of refugees who were British citizens but who stated that they did not feel British in any respect. Thus, sense of belonging and identity were different from the legal status of citizen. There were links to structural factors pertaining to inclusion or exclusion. Two interviewees specifically said that their lack of identification with Britishness was because they felt rejected by British society. When people felt rejected by British society, and when they themselves or other refugees were seen to be experiencing difficulties within that society, they re-emphasised their refugee identity, or at least felt more strongly that they were refugees. For most of the interviewees who felt British, these feelings had emerged over time. However, one stated that having a British passport provided security, but not identity.

Finally, ICAR work on refugee citizenship in the UK hints at the scholarly challenge to the view of citizenship being associated with membership and inclusion, instead of focusing on how it can conversely function as a form of exclusion and discrimination (ICAR 2010). Indeed, other literature explains that "the citizenship of certain types of people implies the non-citizenship of others" (Castles and Davidson 2000, 10). So whilst citizenship is meant to be universalistic and above cultural differences, it only exists within the context of the nation state which is based upon cultural specificity. This relates to Parekh's (2008) concerns mentioned earlier, that the construction of Britishness and its placement within citizenship can act to exclude rather than include. Ager and Strang's (2008) framework clearly outlines how rights and citizenship are the foundation upon which refugee integration is built upon. And research has documented how refugees' perceptions of integration not only focus upon functional and subjective aspects of integration but also upon aspirations for citizenship (Atfield et al 2007). It is therefore important to consider more fully the issues of citizenship alongside debates on refugee integration (Smyth et al 2010).



## 2.6 Scotland – Identity and Belonging

It is important to consider how the prevailing notions of nationhood and citizenship can inform our understandings of refugee integration and belonging (Strang and Ager 2010), but also how they operate at different spatial levels. As discussed above, Marshall's conception of citizenship was a national one, with a presumption that the nation state is the natural scale for the organisation of political and social life (Jeffery 2009). Devolved governments, whether perceived as national or regional, may define integration, citizenship and belonging in different ways than that of central government, which leads to a rescaling of social rights to the devolved level. The public appears to be in favour of a state-wide conception of social citizenship despite the creation of an extensive political citizenship at the devolved scale (Jeffery 2009), although clearly the differences between state and nation add a further dimension to such perspectives. Nonetheless, the structure of devolution in the UK almost guarantees that political divergence will affect social rights. The devolution of political rights and consequent territorial differentiation of social rights may therefore prompt inter-regional tensions which undermine shared commitments to a state-wide social citizenship (Jeffery 2009). Thus rights may differ in the Scottish context, requiring some analysis as to whether this has an impact on the identity and feelings of belonging among migrants and refugees within that context.

Williams and De Lima (2006) point to one major difference in the Scottish context regarding the 'national question', which subsequently impacts upon identity and belonging. For them the absence of race as a major political issue in Scotland has often been down to the English being framed as the 'significant other' rather than various ethnic minorities. The implication is that Scottish based discrimination has tended to be aimed at the English. Nevertheless claims to belonging must occur within the context of public views of what constitutes Scottishness. Bond and Rosie (2006) examined responses in the Scottish Social Attitudes Survey conducted in 2003 in an attempt

to discover what Scottishness means to people in Scotland. The first point they make is that being Scottish appears to be a defining identity for a large proportion of people in Scotland, in contrast to the decline in people throughout Britain identifying as being British. While this was most pronounced for those born in Scotland, it was also the case for a large proportion of people born outside of Scotland, about 40 per cent of whom regarded themselves as Scottish. This suggests that people feel able to 'become' Scottish even if they are not born in the country. Stone and Muir (2007) found that while aggregate geographical identities decreased between 1990 and 2000, identification with locality actually increased. Furthermore, Fenton (2007) has argued that this trend is even stronger among people from a BME community. As one example, some 1500 interviews conducted with minorities in Scotland found that minority ethnic groups more easily identified with Scotland rather than Britain because their identities are cultural rather than territorial (Hussain and Miller 2005). This raises interesting questions in relation to the experiences and opinions of refugees becoming British citizens in the context of a devolved Scotland. For example, do refugees identify with Britain or Scotland, a more localised space, or indeed have none of those identities?

McCrone and Bechhofer (2008) make the point that who we are and are judged to be depends in part on how our claims are regarded by others. In their analysis, they found that the most important factor in claims to Scottishness was being born in Scotland. Nevertheless "who is defined as 'one of us' by the state bears directly on that and is usually a matter of nationality, that is, citizenship, rather than national identity per se" (McCrone and Bechhofer 2008, 1246). The mediation of belonging is dependent on 'identity markers', not only birthplace but also ancestry, accent, appearance and dress. These identity markers can therefore play a key part in the degree to which our claims to belonging are accepted. The work of McCrone and Bechhofer (2008) sought to examine whether Scots thought relatively recent arrivals could ever

have a claim to Scottishness. One third felt that those who had come here to work had a right to call themselves Scottish, while just over 10 per cent strongly disagreed. Furthermore, Hussain and Miller (2006) have documented how minorities consider the devolution of power to a Scottish Parliament as having made Scots at once more proud and less xenophobic. Although Muslims have suffered increased harassment since 9/11, this has been less the case in Scotland than elsewhere. It was suggested that either consciously or unconsciously Scottish identities and even Scottish nationalism were employed as tools of integration. Thus the importance of Scottishness highlighted by Bond and Rosie (2006), combined with the relative openness of claims to Scottishness suggests that Scottish identity may be, or become, an important part of the identity of refugees in Scotland.

Taking account of the fact that identities are fluid and have temporal dimensions, length of stay in Scotland will clearly impact upon sense of belonging and identification with Scottishness. And this is particularly relevant given that a large proportion of refugees have been dispersed across the UK on a no-choice basis. Despite strong anecdotal evidence of secondary migration to London from the regions, there is evidence from the West Midlands and the North West that around 50 per cent of asylum seekers are choosing to remain in the regions upon receipt of a positive decision (Griffiths et al 2006). Similar findings have emerged in the Scottish case with around 50 per cent of dispersed refugees remaining in Glasgow after being granted status (Stewart 2009). While no comparative work exists to examine the degree to which sense of belonging varies by city or region, quantitative work by UKBA (2010), added to the coming census may provide some evidence of similarities and differences in settlement.

## 2.7 Summary

While this literature review makes no claims to be exhaustive, it does highlight a number of key issues for this research project. In particular the relationship between identity and citizenship, as well as the way it interacts with policy are serious considerations that the empirical part of this report will engage with. Linked to identity or identities are the issues of transnationalism, post-national citizenship and globalisation. The way these concepts interact with the identity and belonging of refugees in Scotland is also developed throughout this report. Indeed the issue of belonging and how it does or does not relate to citizenship and identity was key to this research project. Linked to this is the relationship between citizenship and refugee integration. The interaction of citizenship as a tool or reward for integration is taken on during the empirical part of the research project. While the issue of Scottish particularity is an interesting one, this research is not comparative and so only inferences can be made about the distinctiveness of Scotland and Scottishness. However, the views of refugees about Scotland are of relevance in their own right and the issue of Scottish identity is therefore one that the following sections do try to engage with.

In linking to the above literature, the specific objectives of the research include:

- To examine the reasons why refugees decide to apply for British citizenship or not.
- To explore the difficulties that refugees have faced in progressing towards citizenship.
- To explore the views of refugees on the concepts of integration, citizenship, Britishness and Scottishness.
- To determine how becoming British citizens (or not) impacts upon the daily activities of refugees, sense of self-identity and long term integration.

Below we outline our methodological approach to addressing these research aims and objectives.

## 3. Introduction

As outlined in the introduction, this project adopted a mixed methodological approach, including both quantitative and qualitative methods. The project consisted of three main phases including analysis of secondary literature (including academic and grey literature), analysis of secondary data on UK citizenship and conducting 30 in-depth interviews with refugees living in Scotland. To begin, the research focused upon collating and summarising research previously conducted on refugee integration and citizenship. During this time basic analysis of published data on British citizenship for the past 10 years, published by the UK Home Office, was conducted. A brief discussion of this follows below before attention then turns to the empirical data collection.

### 3.1 Statistical Overview

#### 3.1.1 Immigration and British Citizenship

There are a number of data sources that relate to the issue of refugees and citizenship. Statistics produced by the Home Office include Statistical Bulletins on Asylum Statistics as well as Persons Granted British Citizenship. These are available online and can be downloaded for the past 10 years in the UK. The 2005 Persons Granted British Citizenship bulletin analysed the tendency of overseas nationals to take up British citizenship (Freelove Mensah 2006). This is interesting and useful data, if somewhat limited. The analysis employed UK Labour Force Survey data along with British citizenship data to estimate the proportion of overseas born persons living in the UK who said they were British citizens. This was then compared to the total overseas born population to give a proportion of migrants who had taken up British citizenship. The analysis found that people born in countries like Australia, New Zealand, US, Canada and EU states were less likely to become British citizens than those born in developing countries like Africa, Asia and the Middle East. It was estimated that around 80 per cent of individuals born in the Indian sub-continent and who had been living in the UK for more than six years had obtained British citizenship. Around 70 per cent of individuals from Africa and the Middle East had similarly taken up British citizenship. It was further discovered that the longer a person had remained in the UK, the more

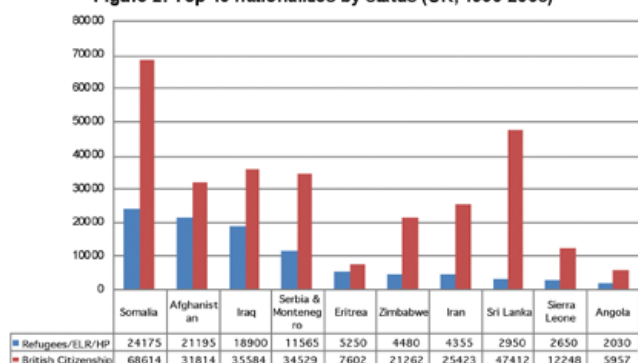
likely they were to have gained British citizenship. Unfortunately, this data lacks detail on the exact countries of origin and does not differentiate between different immigration statuses, for example comparing the take-up of citizenship by migrant or refugee populations.

Looking to the most recently published data on British citizenship, there are a number of trends to be observed (Danzelman 2009). Some 50 per cent of grants were on the basis of residence. The main nationalities granted British citizenship were Indian, Pakistani, Iraqi, Somali and Zimbabwean. Almost all nationalities saw falls in the number of British citizenship grants, with the exception of grants to Iraqis which increased 62 per cent in 2008 and grants to Pakistanis which increased by 16 per cent. Seven per cent of total applications for British citizenship were refused, withdrawn or found to be British already. Reflecting the fall in overall applications for British citizenship, in 2008 some 91,450 attended a British citizenship ceremony which was a fall of 24 per cent from 2007. Almost half of all ceremonies took place in the Greater London area followed by the South East. The four local authorities holding the highest numbers of ceremonies were Birmingham, Ealing, Brent and Newham.

#### 3.1.2 Refugees and British Citizenship

Analysis of Home Office Asylum Statistics for the past 10 years indicates that the top 10 nationalities granted refugee status, ELR or humanitarian protection from 1998-2008 in the UK were from Somalia, Afghanistan, Iraq, Serbia and Montenegro, Eritrea, Zimbabwe, Iran, Sri Lanka, Sierra Leone and Angola (Figure two). In terms of the top five nationalities who have been granted this protection, there were over 24,175 Somalis, 21,195 Afghanis, 18,900 Iraqis, 11,565 Serbs and Montenegrins and 5250 Eritreans during that 10-year period. In the same period nearly three times more individuals of the same nationalities became British citizens (68,614 Somalis, 34,529 Serbs and Montenegrins), with almost one third more of the remaining top five nationalities becoming British (31,814 Afghanis, 35,584 Iraqis and 7602 Eritreans). Due to the lack of cross-tabulation of this published data, it is not possible to determine whether the individuals that were granted refugee status went on to become British citizens.

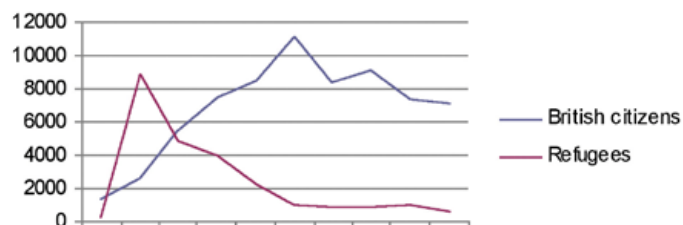
Figure 2: Top 10 nationalities by status (UK, 1999-2008)



(Source: Home Office Asylum Statistics and Persons Granted British Citizenship, 1999-2008)

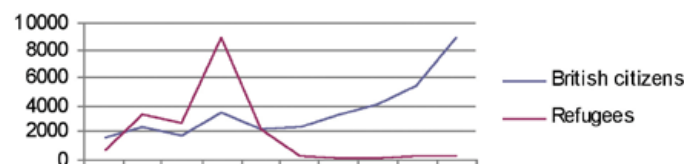
It is interesting, however, to cross-tabulate the refugee statistics with the British citizenship data by nationality (see Figure 2) to explore potential trends. When examining the top 10 nationalities for the past 10 years in the UK, there appears to be common patterns between peak levels of refugee status granted to individuals and peak numbers of individuals becoming British citizens. This is particularly true when examining the trends for individuals from Somalia, Eritrea, Zimbabwe, Angola, Sierra Leone, Iraq, Afghanistan and Serbia and Montenegro. For example, figure three indicates that the peak number of Somalis granted refugee status in 2000 was followed by a peak number of Somalis becoming British citizens in 2005. A similar trend is observed amongst Iraqis and Afghanis living in the UK (Figures 4 & 5). With clear caveats about the inferences being made in relation to the data, there may be some suggestion here that individuals granted refugee status, ELR or humanitarian protection are likely to eventually apply for and become British citizens. There are different patterns, however, when examining the data for individuals from Sri Lanka and Iran (Figures 6 & 7). From both countries, there are relatively low levels of individuals granted refugee protection which contrasts significant numbers of individuals becoming British citizens. Although refugees from these countries may apply for citizenship in the same ways as the other nationalities analysed, this data could equally point to the limited uptake of citizenship amongst these groups. Otherwise, these individuals granted British citizenship may not have been refugees but entered the UK via alternative routes such as work or student visas. Given the limitations of the data sources, however, it is not possible to make firm conclusions or inferences.

Figure 3: Somalis in the UK (1999-2008)



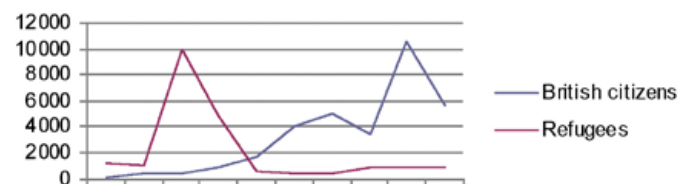
(Source: Home Office Asylum Statistics and Persons Granted British Citizenship, 1999-2008)

Figure 4: Iraqis in the UK (1999-2008)



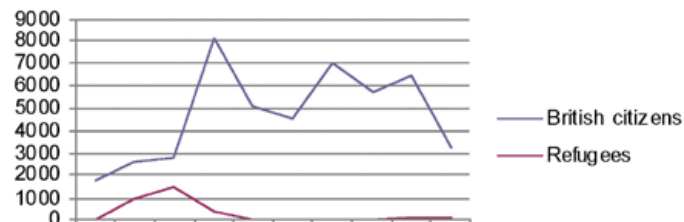
(Source: Home Office Asylum Statistics and Persons Granted British Citizenship, 1999-2008)

Figure 5: Afghanis in the UK (1999-2008)



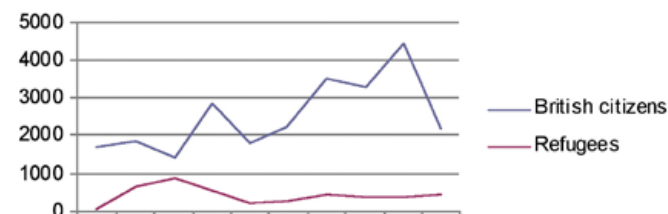
(Source: Home Office Asylum Statistics and Persons Granted British Citizenship, 1999-2008)

Figure 6: Sri Lankan in the UK (1999-2008)



(Source: Home Office Asylum Statistics and Persons Granted British Citizenship, 1999-2008)

Figure 7: Iranians in the UK (1999-2008)

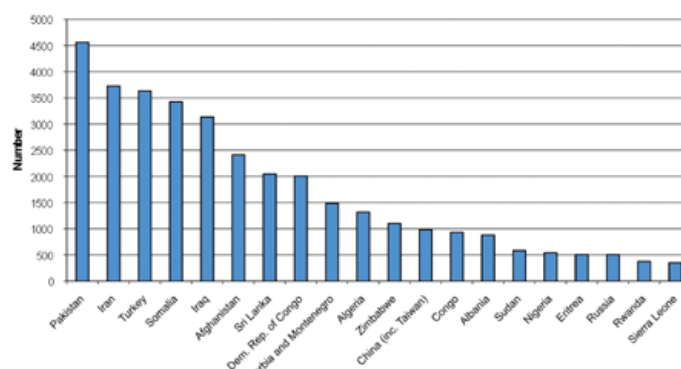


(Source: Home Office Asylum Statistics and Persons Granted British Citizenship, 1999-2008)

### 3.1.3 Refugees and Citizenship in Scotland

Analysis of Home Office Asylum Statistics for the past 10 years indicates that the top five nationalities of asylum seeker supported by NASS in Scotland are from Pakistan, Iran, Turkey, Somalia and Iraq (Figure 8). Other important groups include Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Sri Lanka, Serbia and Montenegro and Algeria. Since 2004 there have been 17,530 individuals granted British citizenship in Scotland. Some 1,810 or 10.3 per cent of applications have been refused. This is a slightly higher proportion than for the UK overall (7 per cent). The top five local authorities that have hosted citizenship ceremonies from 2005-2009 are Glasgow City, City of Edinburgh, Aberdeen City, Fife and South Lanarkshire. Some 3,755 ceremonies were held in Glasgow, Edinburgh held 2,675 ceremonies and Aberdeen local authority was the host for 1,065 citizenship ceremonies between 2005 and 2009. Regarding the nationality of individuals applying for British citizenship in Scotland, the top five origin countries (from 2004-2009) are Pakistan, India, South Africa, China and Turkey. As above, it is not possible to determine which applications for British citizenship have been submitted by refugees. As explained by the UK Border Agency, the Nationality database does not record details of a person's previous immigration status before becoming a British citizen. This means that although numbers can be produced separately for those granted refugee status and those granted citizenship, it is not possible to cross-tabulate this information without reference to all individual files. Nevertheless, a broad comparison of the top nationalities supported by NASS in Scotland with the nationalities of individuals applying for British citizenship does indicate similar patterns. All countries of nationality represented in

Figure 8: Top 20 NASS supported asylum seekers in Scotland (2001-2008)



(Source: Home Office Asylum Statistics 2001-2008)

the top five nationalities of asylum seeker supported by NASS for the past 10 years in Scotland (namely Pakistan, Iran, Turkey, Somalia and Iraq) are to be found within the top 15 countries of applicants for British citizenship. From 2004-2009, some 2,705 individuals from Pakistan applied for British citizenship, 600 individuals from Iran, 815 applicants from Turkey, 305 from Somalia and 780 applicants for British citizenship were from Iraq.

Overall, therefore, one can draw limited observations from the data currently published by the UK Home Office. For example, a useful survey of new refugees in the UK lacks information on citizenship (UKBA 2010). Further quantitative analysis and conclusive findings are hampered by the lack of data published in the form of cross-tabulations at the Scottish and UK level. This investigation would suggest that if the government regards refugees becoming British citizens as a priority it may be advisable to investigate how this data situation could be improved. Otherwise, current and future policy recommendations may be limited by a focus upon either anecdotal evidence or relatively small scale research projects.

## 3.2 In-Depth Interviews

### 3.2.1 Geographical Context

It is important to provide a brief outline of the geographical context of the research project. The in-depth interviews were conducted in Scotland with the majority of research participants living in the city of Glasgow. There are an estimated 10,000 refugees and asylum seekers in Scotland which represent over 50 different nationalities (Charlaff et al 2004). The asylum and immigration regime in Scotland is complex due to the devolved government (Bowes et al. 2009). Legislation associated with immigration and asylum is a matter reserved for Westminster, with the National Asylum Support Service (NASS) established to manage dispersal on a UK-wide basis. Nevertheless, the multiple agencies that provide support to asylum seekers such as health, education and social services operate and are controlled by the Scottish Parliament. There are also several unique issues related to Glasgow that should be noted. As a city, Glasgow has somewhat limited experience of multiculturalism which has created several challenges as well as opportunities (Sim and Bowes 2007). There is a relatively positive political climate towards immigration issues in Scotland with several policies that actively encourage migration and settlement in Scotland (e.g. Fresh Talent) as well as supporting the successful settlement of refugees (e.g. Scottish Refugee Integration Forum) (Charlaff et al 2004). There is also relatively positive media coverage of immigration issues in Scotland as well as more favourable public opinion towards asylum issues (Finney and Robinson 2008; Lewis 2006). The majority of the interview sample were living in Glasgow (28) with two individuals living in Edinburgh at the time of the interview. The sample is clearly Scotland based and there may be specific issues related to this geographical context. But although this project makes no claims to represent refugees' experiences across the UK, given that

refugee and citizenship policy operates at the UK level, it is likely that several topics raised are not unique to this context. The diversity of individuals interviewed also means that important and valuable in-depth insights can be drawn from these accounts.

### 3.2.2 Access and Ethics

The primary focus of this project was to conduct qualitative in-depth interviews with refugees in Scotland. As with all research projects involving refugees, there are challenges in relation to access (Temple and Moran 2006). This was addressed by relying upon several gatekeepers as well as snowball sampling (Bloch 1999). In particular, access problems were overcome by building upon relationships that refugees had developed over a period of time with caseworkers at Scottish Refugee Council. Key informants within refugee communities in Glasgow also assisted in providing contacts for potential interviewees. Conducting research with refugee populations also raises important ethical issues which must be considered by researchers (Leaning 2001). The research project was scrutinised by the University of Strathclyde's Ethics Committee and approval was granted for the investigation. At all times the well being of refugees was considered with informed consent being sought both verbally and in writing. The majority of interviews were conducted at the offices of the Scottish Refugee Council and interviewees were informed that they could withdraw from the study at any time. Finally it was important to establish trust with the refugees taking part in the research (Hynes 2003). Caseworkers at the SRC as well as gatekeepers were invaluable in introducing the project to potential participants. This enabled the researchers, who were essentially 'outsiders' to the participants, to establish a basis for forging contacts with the interviewees. Additionally, respondents were often met initially by caseworkers at the SRC to facilitate the introduction of the researcher before the interview was agreed to and conducted.

It was felt that this sensitive approach to meeting the interviewees was important for gaining trust and allowing for potentially vulnerable individuals to opt out of the interview if they so desired. Interviewees were assured that all information provided would be confidential and completely anonymous, which is important for gaining trust. And finally, interviewees were given the option of receiving a copy of their typed interview transcript and therefore an opportunity to make changes or ask for information not to be used. A few interviewees made specific requests for information to be changed or omitted, which was agreed to.

### 3.2.3 Interview Sampling

The rationale behind the qualitative strategy was to uncover in-depth reasons for refugees becoming British and to explore concepts rather than documenting general trends. The main aim was to stratify the sample wherever possible in terms of socio-demographic characteristics and citizenship status. Importantly, efforts were made to contact refugees who had taken British citizenship and those who consciously decided not to become British citizens. To begin, the above analysis of the data on British citizenship provided insights into the main nationality groups granted British citizenship. The analysis of UK and Scottish data also provided insight into the main nationalities that were granted refugee status. This guided the sampling frame for the in-depth interviews by comparing the respective lists of top ten nationalities. A target list of the top ten nationalities was produced (Somalia, Afghanistan, Iraq, Serbia and Montenegro, Iran, Pakistan, Turkey, Dem. Rep of Congo, Sri Lanka, Zimbabwe<sup>5</sup>) to direct the sampling of interviewees.

The project not only sought to encompass the spatial aspect of identity and belonging but

was interested in the temporal. There was an assumption that length of time in the country would impact on refugee responses, but it was also felt necessary to build in temporal changes within the policy context. This primarily concerned the decision in 2005 to end permanent refugee status, replaced by a five year period in which conditions in the country of origin would be kept under review. The 2005 changes were seen as a potentially important point of difference and the sample was reflective of this. The project therefore sought to integrate a temporal dimension by selecting some respondents according to their length of time in the country. The target was to include refugees who were in Scotland when UK dispersal began in 2000, those who have been affected by the changes in 2005 and more recent arrivals in 2010. It was decided not to include asylum seekers in the sample, as their legal status was still uncertain. In summary the following key characteristics directed the interview sampling:

- country of origin
- gender
- age
- family status
- entry to UK
- citizenship status

The project adopted a combination of stratified and opportunistic sampling. The final size and make-up of the sample is not intended to be comprehensive and representative of the whole refugee population in Scotland, as this group is complex and diverse. However, the project is illustrative and indicative of certain general trends and characteristics of the refugee population.

<sup>5</sup> After consultation with caseworkers at the SRC, Eritrea, Sierra Leone, Angola and Algeria were also added to the list.

### 3.2.4 Interview Sampling

In terms of the final sample, the target of 30 in-depth interviews was conducted over the period from February to March 2010. Each of these interviews lasted from around 45 minutes to one hour. The majority of the interviews were conducted in English but professional interpreters were employed where necessary. The interviews were semi-structured with a list of key themes and questions. Topics covered included:

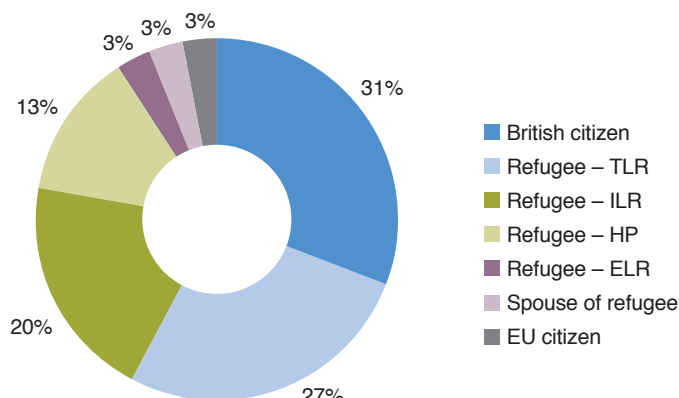
- seeking asylum in the UK
- personal experiences of becoming a British citizen (or not)
- attitudes to Britishness/Scottishness
- links between integration and identity

The socio-demographic composition of the final sample is as follows. There were 23 different nationalities interviewed including individuals from Somalia, Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Eritrea and Zimbabwe. Some 20 individuals were male, whilst 10 females were interviewed. Sixty-two per cent of the sample had children. In terms of the age structure of the sample, some 60 per cent of the sample was under 40 years of age whilst 40 per cent were over 40 years of age. Regarding entry to the UK, 16 individuals had entered the UK between 2000-2004 and 14 individuals had arrived after 2005. We also asked individuals about the year they had been granted status. Five individuals were granted status between 2000-2004, 17 individuals were between 2005-2009 and 8 individuals were granted status in 2010. As planned, no asylum seekers were interviewed as part of this research project. Some 28 individuals lived in Glasgow, whilst two were living in Edinburgh. Two thirds of the sample had been dispersed to Glasgow as part of the UK dispersal policy, whilst the remainder of the sample had either arrived in Scotland spontaneously or moved to Scotland voluntarily after being granted status. The sample was relatively well educated with over half of the interviewees having undertaken higher education and classifying themselves as professionals. Nevertheless, only 17 per cent of the sample was currently employed, with 28 per cent unemployed.

The remainder of the sample stated that they were either students, currently in training, volunteering or retired. Finally each individual was asked to state their current legal status in the UK. Some 31 per cent of the sample were British citizens, 27 per cent had temporary leave to remain and 20 per cent had indefinite leave to remain. Other categories stated were humanitarian protection, exceptional leave to remain, dependent status (spouse) and EU citizen (see Figure 9).

Finally, it should be noted that all respondents have been anonymised in the text and a descriptor has been provided where appropriate. Throughout the report country of origin has been replaced with region of origin to protect the identity of the interviewees. An interviewee matrix has been provided to detail the key socio-demographics of each respondent (Table one).

**Figure 9: Interviewee sample by current status**



(Source: Interviewee sample, Glasgow 2010)



Table 1: Interviewee sample

Code	Gender	Region or Origin	Age	Children	Entry to UK
GM1	Male	Central Africa	50's	Yes	2000-2004
GM2	Male	East Africa	20's	No	2005-2009
GM3	Male	East Africa	20's	No	2005-2009
GM4	Male	Asia	20's	Yes	2005-2009
GM5	Male	Middle East	30's	Yes	2005-2009
GM6	Male	North Africa	20's	No	2005-2009
GM7	Male	East Africa	40's	Yes	2000-2004
GM8	Male	West Africa	50's	Yes	2005-2009
GM9	Male	Central Africa	50's	Yes	2000-2004
GM10	Male	Middle East	20's	No	2005-2009
GM11	Male	Central Africa	40's	Yes	2000-2004
GM12	Male	Middle East	20's	No	2000-2004
GM13	Male	North Africa	60+	Yes	2000-2004
GM14	Male	East Africa	20's	No	2005-2009
GM15	Male	East Africa	30's	No	2005-2009
GM16	Male	Middle East	30's	No	2005-2009
GM17	Male	East Africa	40's	No	2000-2004
GM18	Male	Central Africa	30's	No	2000-2004
GF1	Female	Middle East	40's	Yes	2005-2009
GF2	Female	Central Asia	30's	Yes	2000-2004
GF3	Female	Europe	40's	Yes	2000-2004
GF4	Female	West Africa	20's	Yes	2000-2004
GF5	Female	Central Asia	50's	Yes	2000-2004
GF6	Female	Central Asia	30's	Yes	2005-2009
GF7	Female	South Asia	30's	Yes	2000-2004
GF8	Female	East Africa	20's	No	2005-2009
GF9	Female	East Africa	30's	Yes	2005-2009
GF10	Female	Southern Africa	20's	No	2000-2004
EM1	Male	Europe	60+	Yes	Before 2000
EM2	Male	West Africa	40's	Yes	Before 2000

Status	Dispersed to Glasgow	Education Level	Occupation Level	Current Employment
Refugee - ILR	No	Higher Education	Professional	Student
Refugee - HP	Yes	Further Education	Manual/labourer	Student
Refugee - TLR	Yes	Further Education	Manual/labourer	Volunteer
Refugee - TLR	Yes	Higher Education	Professional	Volunteer
Refugee - TLR	Yes	Higher Education	Professional	Unemployed
Refugee - TLR	Yes	Higher Education	Other	Training
Refugee - ELR	Yes	Higher Education	Professional	Unemployed
Spouse of Refugee	No	Higher Education	Professional	Training
British citizen	No	Higher Education	Professional	Student
Refugee - TLR	Yes	Higher Education	Skilled/trade	Employed
Refugee - ILR	Yes	Higher Education	Professional	Student
British citizen	Yes	None	Other	Unemployed
British citizen	Yes	Further Education	Skilled/trade	Unemployed
Refugee - TLR	Yes	Further Education	Other	Student
Refugee - HP	No	Higher Education	Professional	Student
Refugee - HP	Yes	Further Education	Manual/labourer	Unemployed
British citizen	Yes	Postgraduate level	Professional	Employed
British citizen	No	Postgraduate level	Professional	Employed
EU citizen	No	Higher Education	Professional	Student
Refugee - ILR	Yes	Higher Education	Skilled/trade	Student
British citizen	Yes	Higher Education	Skilled/trade	Employed
Refugee - ILR	No	Higher Education	Professional	Unemployed
Refugee - ILR	Yes	Higher Education	Professional	Unemployed
Refugee - HP	Yes	Higher Education	Professional	Student
Refugee - ILR	Yes	Higher Education	Professional	Unemployed
Refugee - TLR	No	Further Education	Other	Student
Refugee - TLR	Yes	Secondary level	Skilled/trade	Employed
British citizen	No	Further Education	Professional	Employed
British citizen	No	Postgraduate level	Professional	Retired
British citizen	No	Postgraduate level	Professional	Student

## 4. Introduction – Overview of Research Findings

This section discusses the research findings from the 30 in-depth interviews with refugees. Where possible it intertwines these findings with issues highlighted in the literature review. This analysis starts by investigating the meaning of citizenship among refugees. This involves an analysis of the hierarchy of statuses implicit in many of the interviews, with asylum seeking viewed as the lowest status and citizenship as the highest. This highlights the views of respondents on being an asylum seeker, being a refugee and being a British citizen. Following on from that, we then examine issues of instrumental citizenship and how this influences the decision making of refugees regarding whether to become British citizens (or not). This primarily concerns the rights of citizens to vote and to have a passport as proof of identification. However, the issue of employment is also raised with many respondents arguing that only citizenship would allow them to be treated the same as others in terms of accessing job opportunities. This was particularly raised around the issue of five year refugee status. There follows a number of subsidiary instrumental reasons for taking citizenship, including access to services and the importance of securing status among families. The section concludes by highlighting the feeling among a number of interviewees that they lacked choice about becoming a British citizen and it was therefore a default option.

The following sub-section explores the drivers to citizenship beyond the instrumental. This involves the fear many respondents feel regarding being returned to their country of origin and the security they seek as a result. This was again primarily raised in relation to the five year nature of refugee status. Following on from this we discuss refugees' views on the process of becoming a British citizen. This concerns where people obtain their information from, views of both citizenship and language tests, and the application process itself. The latter of these primarily revolved around the cost of applications. The sub-section concludes by looking at the reasons some respondents gave for not wishing to become British citizens. The next section examines issues around the social contract

and the communitarian conception of citizenship revolving around both rights and responsibilities. It then continues by looking at the connections between citizenship and the integration of refugees. This is subsequently related to the way citizenship impacts upon how refugees identify themselves and its role in inculcating, or not, a sense of belonging. The section concludes by looking at how having children impacts upon the identity of refugees and then examines the views of refugees about any perceived differences between British and Scottish identities.

### 4.1 The Meaning of Citizenship/Legal Status and Hierarchy of Rights

#### 4.1.1 Introduction

A number of questions were asked of interview participants that related to the meaning of citizenship. Although themes emerged that could be applicable to other migrant groups in the UK, it is worth stressing the particularity of the situation facing refugee populations vis-à-vis the process of becoming British citizens. Unlike other migrant groups, refugees are in the unique position that they cannot return to their home countries. As such, there is real uncertainty in terms of their legal status after seeking asylum in the UK. This was explained by one individual:-

*“the people who came and they have lots of difficulties in their countries and they’re seeking asylum and then became a refugee, so their aim is to be a citizen of this country because they lose everything in their country and they don’t have hope to go back in their countries. So for this reason they are worrying about their future and mostly the family who has children, they just want to have something in the country they are, so they prefer to have the citizenship” (GF7, Female, South Asia, 30’s, Refugee).*

The inability to return to their home country and the loss of permanent legal status suggests that decisions taken by refugees about becoming British citizens should be considered in this somewhat unique context. Furthermore, it is also worth noting that the rationale behind decision-making regarding whether to take citizenship is not a static one. People’s feelings and plans change and alter over time. As one respondent explained:-

*“when we came, nearly seven years ago, when we came into the UK, we never thought about British citizenship, never thought, we just wanted to settle down, we wanted just normal life, we claim asylum and we flit our country and we never thought about it but when we have an opportunity, when we had an opportunity we just decided to, why not to apply?” (GF3).*

Having spent a long period of time living in the UK, this woman had decided that permanent settlement through citizenship was desirable. This echoes the findings of Kelley and McAllister (1982) that age and length of time in the country have an impact upon decision making. For others the prospect of citizenship was linked to ending their refugee journey. One woman put it simply by saying “actually its more like finish everything, finish with like Home Office and immigration and start like new life” (GF2).

Despite differences in attitudes towards British citizenship and changes over time, intrinsic within responses to the questions about citizenship was the conception that there is a somewhat sequential process of rights acquisition as an individual moves from being an asylum seeker, to becoming a refugee, and then on to being naturalised and becoming a British citizen. One interviewee summed up this notion of a journey to ‘normality’, when stating “if you come a refugee it is like you a step you went to a level for one step, and to fulfil all is to become British and if you become British you will be satisfied so you reach the top” (GM9). This gives weight to the argument made by Kibreab (2003) that the acquisition of rights has an impact upon decision-making. Similar to this individual, there was a discernible feeling among a number of respondents that the UK was a ‘special’ country. For example, one individual discussed what it would mean to become British when stating, “it would mean a big thing. As you know, the UK Government is famous with its great royal history which is depicted in freedom and democracy” (GM5). Another said “being a citizen probably it might make you a citizen of whatever we classify it as, first world or second world countries” (GM4). While for some people this view emanated from a feeling of gratitude for providing safety (Morrell 2009), for

others these views were long held ones. Belonging to the UK through the acquisition of citizenship was important due to long held views of Britain. One woman put it thus:-

*“for me Britain in general is something, is something special to be honest and I remember when we lived in (country of origin), for me Britain it was like an untouchable country, it was something special, it was like, like royalty, you cannot touch it. I don’t know, probably history lessons because all the time when we had them in our school, history lessons it always, we always, our teachers they always divide west countries and east countries and it always was priority in west countries, it was of Britain, Great Britain and I don’t know, just history, just history and for me even now when we have our passports, for me it’s like when you think going to the moon, you know, this is impossible, you cannot go to the moon and for us to get British passport, it’s like in the same feeling to have British passports, something special, just something special, just I still can’t believe it, we have it” (GF4, Female, West Africa, 20’s, Refugee).*

As alluded to by these respondents and others, there is a sense of hierarchy existing between legal statuses, with becoming a British citizen being the ultimate goal or achievement. As explained:-

*“well, always, at the end of something there should be, like, a reward, like...say, success, you see, so after being an asylum seeker and then being granted status for some time and then the end is to seal it with naturalisation, being a British citizen, alright. So, it is just a natural process that I had to do” (GM17).*

The combination of citizenship as a reward and citizenship being regarded as a natural process (Castles and Davidson 2000) shows the multi-dimensional nature of thoughts and processes of both rights acquisition and citizenship. In order to reach the ‘ultimate’ destination of becoming a British citizen, there are three key stages or transitions through which individuals have to pass. This includes the transitions from asylum seeker to refugee, and from refugee to British citizen. Each of these is discussed in turn below.

### 4.1.2 Being an Asylum Seeker

First, individuals talked about the experiences of being an asylum seeker and the transition when gaining refugee status. There was a sense that life began when the asylum process ended, with the uncertainty of being removed from the UK no longer present. One individual explains:-

*"I can tell you, so when you are asylum seeker, asylum seeker is not very good, not good for mood you know, always you're thinking, thinking you are going to the Home Office for signing. Today they deport me, today you know. There's very many thinking in your head. For me, for my case, when I was an asylum seeker I was always scared, I was afraid. But after, when I got my refugee status it was okay, I found myself human existing. No Home Office, no signing, you are free you know. You have many, many priority, many opportunity you know. Everybody helps you find a new life. This is a new life for me. Just born"* (GM6, Male, North Africa, 20's, Refugee).

This individual draws upon the metaphor of being 're-born' when gaining refugee status and highlights the sense of freedom in comparison to the period of 'cold storage' experienced as an asylum seeker. There is a sense that individuals were stripped of rights whilst seeking asylum and that this powerlessness was reduced after gaining refugee status. Indeed, when asked what changed for people being recognised as refugees the right to access or do certain things were mentioned by many interviewees. Needless to say there are differences in terms of views based on individual experiences, particularly the length of time taken to traverse the asylum system. The issue of choice was, nevertheless, crucial to many of our respondents. One told us that "after I got my immigration document I'm sure I can choose about anything about my future. You know, that's very important for me, because before that when I was asylum seeker I had not any choice" (GM16). He specifically related such choice to educational and employment matters but also viewed choice in all other aspects of his life as widening. Another man talked of the stages of settlement, but also related his position to that of people still in the asylum system. Talking of being an asylum seeker he stated that:-

*"you can't do anything, you can't work, you can't open a business .. Your life 100 percent change. Yeah. That's like after two or three years when I got a British passport, it's different. But I'm looking for my friends now still asylum seekers, they can't do anything. Even if he want to open bank account he can't do it. Nothing. For example, he's not seen his family for ten years ago"* (GM10, Male, Middle East, 20's, Refugee).

The transition from being an asylum seeker to gaining refugee status was equally tied up with less tangible factors and practical rights associated with status. Individuals are acutely aware of the negative media representations and stigma attached to the asylum label (see Khan 2008; Coole 2002; Lugo-Ocando 2007; Independent Asylum Commission 2008; Joffe 2008 for analysis of the media's role in asylum). One individual alluded to the perceptions of the public, as informed by the media, regarding asylum seekers as leading to a difference on becoming a refugee. "As an asylum seeker everything is, you know, you always feel a foreigner because the media is talking against you" (GM7). The attainment of refugee status was therefore an important step for shedding the label of 'asylum seeker' and beginning a normal life. This was summarised by one individual when he stated, "if you don't want the legacy of being an asylum seeker and a refugee, you know...you can choose to be, you know, like any other immigrant or part of...basically a British subject basically" (GM18).

### 4.1.3 Being an Refugee

The second temporal stage which individuals discussed was the gaining of refugee status. This change in legal status, however, did not necessarily lead to a sense of permanence. The temporariness of individuals has previously been associated with the asylum process (Stewart 2005), with the assumption that refugee status will bring permanence and security. What was found, in this research is that refugee status and particularly limited leave to remain does not necessarily lead to a sense of permanence, but of a continued temporariness. The temporary status of refugee security as a result of policy change was mentioned by a number of respondents. One referred to a kind of stalled status:-

*“Nothing big different can say that, but I’m still waiting now. When I get a British passport I will talk again...It’s now like temporary here now, me. Five years. After five years maybe I have a chance to get a British passport or not. If I have a chance, 100 percent my life change. I think change my life” (GM10, Male, Middle East, 20’s, Refugee).*

The permanency, or otherwise, of refugee status, and the impact that this has on daily life was mentioned as a practical reason for opting to take on citizenship. As one individual explained:-

*“as a permanent refugee you still, you still are refugee, I mean you still have means of getting access to those services, which, you know, they will give you, access to becoming employed, you have access to almost everything but you still haven’t got that feeling of being part of the, that nation, that, that, you know, that, being part of that, yeah, being part of that nation, you know, that country, you still are seen as a refugee, you’re not seen as part of, part of the country, seen as part of being British” (GF4, Female, West Africa, 20’s, Refugee).*

Temporariness was thus intrinsic to this woman’s perspective. Talking of why she wanted citizenship, but also on what she thought about temporary, time-bound refugee status, she argued that it would be difficult to contribute fully as a temporary resident:-

*“When it comes to career wise or contribute to the nation, the country you’d, you, you wouldn’t, you’d find it difficult because if you’re working for certain company for example and, you know, you feel, you feel that you become part of them in a way that you’re also trying to help the company to go forward, you know, because we do that, you don’t, you wouldn’t actually think of long term career prospects because you know, you know, that time is coming to an end, so you don’t have long term goals basically, you just, yeah” (GF4, Female, West Africa, 20’s, Refugee).*

This lack of goal setting and longer term outlook highlights other recent research findings that refugees live day to day and hand to mouth rather than having longer term goals and aspirations

(Lindsay et al 2010). The practical challenges associated with having five year refugee status were explained by the following respondents. First, one man related, “there are some problems that might face the individuals if they remain refugees. They will not be able to find suitable jobs easily and they will not travel easily. They will not feel safe and secure. And finally they are not allowed to vote in the elections” (GM5). Not only did this individual highlight the lack of voting rights but he also emphasised employment restrictions facing refugees. This was explained further by the personal experience of one lady:-

*“actually it was quite difficult for me because while I study I did found job but with someone looking at my paper it’s five, for five years, they don’t want to take me because it’s training, they have to spend time and money for training but they think maybe she’s not forever here and we don’t want to pay and just it was so difficult for me to find job” (GF2, Female, Central Asia, 30’s, Refugee).*

Although refugees technically have the right to work, many have found that employers can be reluctant to employ them on the basis that they may not remain permanently in the UK. This issue exacerbates the already existing problems of unemployment and underemployment among refugees (see Bloch 2004; Lindsay et al 2010; Stewart 2003). Another individual who was granted humanitarian protection explained the practical difficulties he faced. He said,

*“so I was not able to travel at the time. Because it is granted outside UN convention on refugee, so you are expected basically to get your...to ask your country...or to go to your country’s Embassy and apply for a passport if you don’t have a passport and then ask the Government to set up the four years leave to remain and your country passport. So basically you are recognised as a refugee. So in that way, yeah, so basically you are obliged to stay here” (GM18, Male, Central Africa, 30’s, British citizen).*

The fact that those with humanitarian protection rather than refugee status do not have the right to a travel document, added to many of the other problems mentioned by participants. So although

people may be granted refugee protection in the UK, there are limitations on the rights that individuals have, both structural and practical. In this case, it was impossible to obtain a travel document, except from the regime from which he had fled, and so the man was restricted in terms of travel. And in the above cases, although individuals had a legal right to access the labour market they faced barriers in doing so.

To summarise, although individuals granted refugee status do gain many rights and opportunities vis-à-vis being asylum seekers there are still key challenges, more of which will be discussed in Section 4.2. As such, this change in legal status is perceived by many to be a step on the journey to becoming British, rather than the end goal. This was explained by one respondent:-

*“well if you have indefinite leave to remain, well, obviously, you will not have the British passport, two, I don’t think, as far as I understand, I don’t think you have the right to vote and the rights, like I say, to equal rights, like, someone who is a British citizen but, it is a transition period towards nationalisation, okay, you don’t become naturalised without having indefinite leave to remain, as far as I understand. You have to have indefinite leave to remain first, okay, and then after a certain period you become a British citizen, it’s a process, alright, so you are only...as a person with indefinite leave to remain, you are in the process of being...okay, naturalised, you see, into becoming a British citizen so, I mean, it’s higher, it’s better than an asylum seeker, okay, if someone has indefinite leave to remain then that’s much better than asylum seeker, obviously, because immigration issue is resolved but still, as far as I understand, that person will not have full or equal rights as a full British citizen” (GM17, Male, East Africa, 40’s, British citizen).*

#### 4.1.4 Becoming a British Citizen

The third stage, namely the move from refugee status to British citizenship was therefore significant both for those who have already become citizens and for many who have not. This step was regarded as a natural and logical one among a number of our participants. One individual asked “if a refugee person lives in the UK and integrated with the British community for over five years, is it required from him to continue being a refugee? I don’t think so” (GM5). Integration in this case was seen as preceding citizenship. To become a British citizen was tied up with practical reasons and the attainment of additional rights (which will be developed more fully in Section 4.2). One notable issue mentioned above that is linked to citizenship attainment was the right to vote. One person noted, “the freedom of a citizen...you have a freedom to vote and to...make your own, position on who you like to vote to, cause, like for us we are refugees and we are not entitled to vote or to participate in politics or something like this in the country” (GM15) whilst another stated that “when you’re a refugee you can’t like participate in things like voting” (GF8). The social contract is confronted by people who are subject to the law but do not have a say in who makes that law.

Along with practical rights attached to citizenship status, individuals referred to psychological reasons for taking citizenship (which will also be explored further below). One man implied that citizenship provides psychological stability when stating “for me, as long as you are called refugee you can’t feel confident of yourself” (GM9). He added that the symbolic as well as instrumental importance of a passport was integral to making him feel whole:-

*“Before the passport I felt I was still incomplete, I am not complete, but when I got...when I received the passport, the British passport I felt...absolutely on the top” (GM9, Male, Central Africa, 50’s, British citizen).*

In conclusion, it is important to note that within our sample there were individuals who did not clearly see distinctions between certain legal statuses. One interviewee stated, “well you see, that’s, if you look at the difference between being British and having indefinite leave to remain, to be honest I think the dividing line is so thin I don’t think there is any difference at all” (GM1). He went on to further explain:-

*“at no time have I been asked or at no time has it kind of seemed to affect my things that I live here, there is not that much difference between indefinite leave to remain and being a British citizen, in fact sometimes I say it is a step towards. It’s a step towards being a British citizen. It does honestly become, once you get indefinite leave to remain, the next thing that, the next step is to become a British citizen and I think it’s so like optional” (GM1, Male, Central Africa, 50’s, Refugee).*

However, the rarity of indefinite leave rather than five years refugee status may magnify existing gaps in rights, or at least perceptions and usability of rights. For some, the difference between holding refugee status and British citizenship was not significant, which is illustrated by the following two comments; “I don’t know where we can use this or other than ticking the forms or something but I don’t think it will really affect day-to-day life actually for me” (GM4). Another explained, “actually I think now I can do everything that the British can do, so there’s no limit and I can walk any time I want but I don’t know there’s a difference” (GF7). These sentiments would imply that becoming a British citizen is not a key priority for such individuals as

they do not perceive that it would have a significant impact upon their daily lives. It is seen as being merely a change in legal status that would be a form of classification, but would not change their day to day activities. Others felt differently and some of their perspectives are considered more in the following discussion.

## 4.2 The Practical Meaning of Citizenship – Instrumentalism

### 4.2.1 Introduction

There is an established instrumental rationale for citizenship in much of the literature (Morrell 2009). Studies have found reasons for taking up citizenship include having voting rights, citizenship providing protection and political freedom, sense of pride as well as particularistic or integrative reasons (Ip et al 1997). The research conducted here has found similar reasons noted by refugee populations, although the parameters of instrumental rationales and practical and emotional reasons for citizenship are somewhat blurred. Linking to the previous chapter, one respondent noted “sometimes it comes and as I said almost legally necessary for somebody to become a British citizen here. Yeah, it is in practical terms I think it’s important” (GM1). So the desire to attain a permanent legal status is closely linked to the practical benefits and rights that are gained from this status. There were a number of concrete and practical reasons for refugees becoming, or seeking to become, British citizens. Table two provides an overview of the rights that both citizens and refugees currently have in the UK.



Table 2: Legal entitlements – refugees and citizens

	Status and Entitlements	Refugee Status	Citizen
Housing	-Social Housing	Yes	Yes
	-Housing Benefit	Yes	Yes
Health	-Full access to health care	Yes	Yes
Education	-Child education	Yes	Yes
	-FE – Home student	Yes	Yes
	-FE – Education Maintenance Allowance	Yes	Yes
	-FE – Learner Support Fund	Yes (16-18)	Yes
	HE – Home Student	Yes	Yes
	HE – Financial Support	Yes	Yes
Employment and benefits	-Benefits	Yes	Yes
	-Employment	Yes	Yes
Travel	Travel Documents	Convention Travel Documents	Own Passport
Political	Voting Rights	No (Unless Commonwealth or EU citizen)	Yes
	Standing for election	No (Unless Commonwealth or EU citizen)	Yes
Families	Right to family settlement	Yes	Yes
Citizenship	Settlement	Already Settled	Already Settled
	Apply for citizenship	After 5 years	Already a Citizen

## 4.2.2 The Right to Vote

A common practical issue noted by many respondents was the right to vote. It is worth highlighting that this research took place in the run up to the 2010 General Election. It is likely, therefore, that political participation was more prominent in respondents' minds than would otherwise have been the case. Nevertheless, the desire for political participation was still noticeable and reflects the previous chapters' comments regarding the acquisition of rights. As one person stated, "for sure, there is a great difference between being a refugee and a British. To be a British is the best, because a person will be able to take part in the election and travel easily. For example, now I cannot take part in the election" (GM5). And this right was particularly valued by refugee populations due to their pre-flight experiences in their country of origin. As one respondent explained:-

*"and the thing that also come with being a citizen is that you are able to vote. I never had that chance in my country. It's something that I do cherish, you know, having...being able to actually vote and feel that my vote will be counted. That's a very important...and I thought it was, yeah, something that, you know, I had to do"* (GM18, Male, Central Africa, 30's, British citizen).

Another highlighted the vote as a tangible right, stating that "first of all I can vote...for me that's very important and it's the first thing for every citizen to have the right to vote, as a refugee I couldn't vote, of course" (EM1). Another added that:-

*"we always thought about it just why not to go and why not to go and choose Prime Minister... it depends on you and yourself but for us, I don't know, just for us it was first reason that we can vote, I don't know, it's all probably strange but for us it was just okay, we can vote, we can choose"* (GF3, Female, Europe, 40's, British citizen).

The emotional and psychological value of that vote was also referred to:-

*"go to the vote, you feel as if you have a value you have a place. You are someone, a number you know, accountable you know...when you choose the man or the person who will make the decision about your life, you feel as if you are son of the country. So you go and you choose the person."*

*You participate to develop the country and make a participation to develop the country you know. So that gives you more and more opportunity"* (GM6, Male, North Africa, 20's, Refugee).

## 4.2.3 Identification Documents and the Ability to Travel

A number of interviewees mentioned the issue of refugee identification and how this was viewed as a lesser form of documentation. While refugee identification should be a relatively straightforward matter and access to certain rights should accrue as a result, there was a feeling that such documentation was second class. Asked about having the rights associated with being a refugee, one interviewee stated that "on the paper, if I read, yeah I have these rights, yes I have, have, have but when I give...it's depend who looking this paper" (GM6). Thus there was a gap between rights possessed by refugees and the ability to use those rights. Another alluded to the difference between having a refugee identity document and a passport, and saw the ramifications of this difference to be wide and deep. One stated:-

*"yes, sure it's different. The first passport, and I have travel documents. When you have a British passport my name was British. Change it from refugee to British...if you want to take a mortgage, if you want to open business, if you want to buy a house, you are British, not refugee"* (GM10, male, Middle east 20s, refugee).

In particular access to a travel document was valued but seen as less substantial than a passport. Travel documents are issued to refugees who do not have passports and there are humanitarian reasons to allow travel whilst there are no national security reasons to restrict or stop travel. The only concrete travel restriction concerns travel to the refugees' country of origin. This issue of access to a passport was therefore symbolically important. However, it was not just the symbolism of having a passport that was valued, but both the travel options that this opened up and the ease that having an accepted form of identification meant for people going about their daily lives. Passports were seen in terms of both freedom and ability to travel. One woman said of travel:-

*“Oh yeah, yeah, it would mark a big change because when you have a British citizenship you’re actually free to go almost anywhere in the world, you’re not restricted when you get to a certain destination they don’t restrict you that much as they would have actually done to someone whose got a refugee status, so being a refugee as far as I know, correct me if I’m wrong, you’d have to probably apply to get visas to get to some, most countries, especially, you know, even, even in Europe” (GF4, Female, West Africa, 20’s, Refugee).*

The benefits of having a passport in order to travel were widely appreciated. However, the other benefit from having a passport was seen as being the protection of the UK while abroad, particularly when visiting their country or region of origin. One stated that:-

*“I would be killed in my country, I escaped. But now with a British passport I can go there because I will be protected in this end. I can go there now. Without a British passport I couldn’t, but now I can go there. I can go there and I will get protected. I will be very, very protected” (GM9, male, Central Africa, British citizen).*

He added that “it was impossible without a British citizen for me to put my leg in (country of origin)” (GM9). Similar sentiments were expressed by another individual who stated:-

*“I was able to (country of origin) actually, to visit (country of origin). Because you have that confidence as well that, you know, as a British citizen, you know, this sense of protection...you know, you’ll always be protected...Even if you have your own country passport people very reluctant to leave the UK for the fear that, you know, the Government is not necessarily obliged to protect you if, you know, you are not within UK, so that’s scary feeling [laughs].” (GM18, Male, Central Africa, 30’s, British citizen).*

Another noted:-

*“I think that just makes it better because you know you can go to (country of origin) and come back but the fact would be, would you be safe there? So the British passport gives you the freedom to travel, you know, you know if you go to (country of origin) you will come out but will you be safe while you’re in there?” (GF10, female, Southern African, 20s, British citizen).*

Whilst many interviewees felt that they would be safe returning to their home country when holding British passports, this freedom was not felt by everyone. An individual from East Africa explained:-

*“so it’s dangerous to go back, I would say, generally, it’s dangerous to go back to your country of origin even if you are a British citizen, because the government in your country of origin will always consider that you are still a national of that country because you are by the look and by the language and by all other reasons, okay, you will be considered still as a national of that country and you will be asked to fulfil other obligations like national service and other duties and things and he potentially might not be allowed to leave that country again. So it’s not recommended” (GM17, Male, East Africa, 40’s, British citizen).*

Diplomatic protection is not always afforded to British nationals residing in countries in which they also have citizenship. In these cases the individuals must look to their nation of residence for protection (Kivisto and Faist 2007). In contrast to the situation of the individual above, another respondent added that having a British passport allowed at least the possibility of seeing family again. He stated, “to return to go to visit because we have family there, we have relatives there. Just for that, but not to return to stay there, because here we have really to find something to stick here” (GM9). Another stated that “I think some of the people think if they’ve got like British passport and they like became, they, sometimes they can visit their country because they’re on the, like are safe by the law, British and someone help them to go away from that” (GF2). Others went further and considered a British passport as opening up the opportunity to engage in employment in their country of origin. One woman stated:-

*“hopefully if my application is successful so I will get British citizenship and also you know there is lots of opportunity for the people to work in their own country, the countries they left. And the most thing is that they require for interpreting these staff. They ask if you are a citizen of this country or not. If you are not a citizen of this country so you cannot go and work there. And if you are a citizen of this country so you can go to work from the UK or United States governments send you to a country and then you can work and help your own people” (GF7, Female, South Asia, 30’s, Refugee).*

Another woman compared the process of arriving in Britain on her refugee documents to her experiences arriving as a citizen. She stated that you,

*“have to write declaration because you’re not British, you have to write why are you coming back to Britain, you have to show you papers that you’ve got indefinite leave to remain but it’s, it’s not so important, I just after, when we became British, it’s, it’s more relaxing, more respectable just to say okay we’re British” (GF3, Female, Europe, 40’s, British citizen).*

Furthermore, the superiority of the British passport for travel was compared to that afforded to individuals with refugee status. It is true that refugees can be granted travel documents and permitted to travel abroad. Nevertheless, this does still create problems, as explained by various individuals. One began, “the travel document for the refugee is accepted among the countries that deal with it. But some countries might delay the process of the refugee’s travel documents or sometimes they put some obstacles when they deal with the refugee’s travel documents” (GM5). As well as restrictions from entering particular countries, there are also time limits set on the movement of refugees, as highlighted “I want to go France for example, I want to go like holiday just like four months or six months, but I can’t, it’s only three months...Yeah, I’ve got travel document, but I can’t stay more than three months” (GM14).

Finally, this issue was also linked to the desire for equality or sameness which will be discussed more below. So there is a sense that to obtain the British passport will simplify people’s lives and make the process of travelling much easier, particularly in families where different members have different forms of status, as summarised by one man,

*“because my wife is British and my son is British too. Yes. I’m not British, and when I want to go for example to France, I have to go to Edinburgh to apply for a visa to go to France. It’s very complicated, you know? And maybe if I have the citizenship passport, British passport it will be easy to go to France with my family, you know?” (GM8, Male, West Africa, 50’s, Spouse of refugee).*

#### 4.2.4 Employment

The issue of employment was key when discussing the UK context and the structural instrumental effects of refugee status vis-à-vis citizenship. Employment was highlighted by a large proportion of our respondents as an important reason for taking citizenship. Although refugees have the right to work, it was felt that this right to work was difficult to realise in practice. One stated that “I would like to work, part-time, two days I’d like to go to college two days and three or two days work. Same you as other people here, but unfortunately I couldn’t find a job. Somebody told me, you have to need to experience in this country. I have no experience here” (GM16). Another respondent explained that long periods of enforced non-working was seen as having an impact on the present ability of people legally entitled to work to actually find work (GM6). Long periods of forced reliance on benefits was also raised by a respondent who felt that his problems were due to a combination of his age and a reluctance on the part of employers to employ ‘foreigners’. He explained,

*“I can tell you that is quite a difficult time for me, I had Income Support but I work in my country almost thirty years and I prefer to work and earn money for my living and for my family, and I tried to find job but it couldn’t possible, firstly because my English wasn’t good, then I was about fifty five and more years old and it was, of course, very difficult to find job” (EM1, Male, Europe, 60+, British citizen).*

There was a widely held perception that the five year nature of refugee status meant that many employers were unwilling to take refugees on, particularly in roles that require an outlay in relation to training. In practical terms, therefore, the five year status was seen to impact upon employment opportunities. One woman stated that “I can’t found a job because I’m a refugee for five years...and I, I understand for employers why they don’t take me for this” (GF5). She added:-

*“I have a lot of rights, I mean permission to work blah blah blah but the problem is that employers not very happy with my situation, also big issue for me is don’t have a travel document which*

*not allowed me to have driving, to get my driving licence, so I mean it's a lot of jobs again, it's probably quite sometimes very, very silly but they, they want me to have driving licence" (GF5, Female, Central Asia, 50's, Refugee).*

Another similarly explained, "I think as an employer maybe if you want to employ somebody in a long term position in somebody is just here for a temporary maybe five years or you're not sure about their future in the country maybe an employee maybe would choose to, to, to choose one who is a citizen" (GM15). Common to many issues of rights among those with leave to remain, there is some confusion regarding what rights people are entitled to. The above is one example. People with humanitarian protection do have a right to a driving license but there was a feeling that this was not the case.

Citizenship was perceived as having a positive effect on overall employment opportunities. Indeed for a number of the interviewees, employment was one of the key reasons for either taking, or hoping to take, UK citizenship. One man described the problem thus;

*"I decide to become British because I'm getting old and I have problem, I have really problem to find a job here, so it will help me with a British passport, it will help me to move from country to country, country to country but I'm here but sometimes somebody can call me to Australia, for example, America, Canada: we have a job for you, and with a British passport it will be very, very easy for me to travel. Even in Africa and Commonwealth countries it will be very, very easy for me to go" (GM9, Male, Central Africa, 50's, British citizen).*

This man had been a teacher in his country of origin but had found it impossible to find suitably skilled work here, so much so that he had given up on the hope of using his existing skills and qualifications. Unfortunately he said, "I don't even still hope to teach here. No hope, because I tried. I went to some classes and I tried to teach, but it's very, very difficult to become a teacher" (GM9). And as a result, he became a British citizen in order to further his potential employment prospects abroad.

#### 4.2.5 Access to Services

Further practical reasons for becoming British citizens related to access to financial services as well as to educational services. For example, access to services was emphasised by a respondent who pointed to the difficulty refugees have in opening bank accounts. "Access to banks, services if I want to have a bank account. Banks are asking me whether I have got a passport or not" (GM7). Another individual recounted a similar experience, "you open account at bank, okay, you are asking for passport, you are going into, for example, you going to gym, they say bring a passport, I don't know, everything is asking passport...you know, this life is no easy without passport because you go into anywhere it's asking for ID card, for passport" (GM12).

Being British was also perceived as being important to gaining access to educational provision and the funding associated with this, despite the comparatively better provision for refugees in Scotland than in other parts of the UK. Nevertheless, citizenship was seen to open up the opportunities of attending university and college whilst being considered as home students. This clearly has implications for the funding of individuals. One woman explained that she was only entitled to public funds after stating that she was a British citizen. She told her story as follows,:-

*"they asked me what's your nationality? And I said (Nationality of Origin) and they said, "oh sorry, are you not entitled to public funds, are you this, are you that", they ask me too many question and then I phoned the same agency again and they asked me the same thing and I said I'm British and they didn't ask me any more questions. So, yeah, it forces you into becoming British maybe, for me, the privileges or the benefits are, you know, more" (GF10, Female, Southern Africa, 20's, British citizen).*

This feeling of opting for citizenship for lack of other options will be returned to below. Finally, one respondent talked of the opening up of various services when stating “I can use all these things that are in the city like library, like gallery and so on, I can use also all the transport and so on, I can have some privilege like Scottish people and so on” (EM1). This feeling of being blocked from access, whether real or imagined, was a key positive identified in opting to take British citizenship.

#### 4.2.6 Children and Family

Beyond instrumental factors existing at the individual level, there were a number of interviewees who were clear that the decision to become British citizens concerned their children and family ties, both in terms of their identity but also in relation to making their lives easier. In practical terms, one woman related the problem in lacking travel documents to her child’s inability to go on school visits. She explained, “it’s a big issue with my son for example from the school he cannot travel from school, for example he’s very sporty, basketball everything, so and a lot of times if the team goes? (he was unable to go with them)” (GF5). Another discussed the importance of children’s education when taking the decision about whether to become British or not in the future, “priority will be on family basis actually so it’s children’s education...at that period where my son will be about ten or so and then when he is used to the school administer and his education then yes, it, it makes me to take the decision of what to do” (GM4).

Conversely some individuals explained that their decision to become British (or not) would not impact significantly upon their children’s citizenship status. One woman said:-

*“when you have got the nationality, citizenship in the UK and then your children will be the same...Yes for the children who was born there its important for them because they have all their life in front and so it’s for their education and for everything is good...But if I have got indefinite leave to remain so I’m not allowed for him to apply for indefinite leave to remain so I can apply for him for citizenship, for British Passport and visa, so*

*then he will be not the same. If I got the citizenship or not got, so it’s not important for him, because he is in the UK. If the children came with their families, so they depend their parents, but the children who are born in the UK, so they will get their citizenship (GF7, Female, South Asia, 30’s, Refugee).*

In broader terms, parents appeared to be concerned about the future of their children, and particularly their sense of belonging and nationality. One woman stated that her daughters already identified with living in Scotland, and so citizenship was an affirmation of that pre-existing identity. “I’m already nearly eight years and my daughter came, she was five, now she spent half her life here and she, she thinks she is Scottish” (GF2). And when asked about why she wanted to become a British citizen, one woman who already held citizenship in another European Union country explained:-

*“I told you because I’m not, it’s not, to be honest it’s not for me but I’m concerned about my children, their future, their rights, that’s why I’m thinking about, about...when my children take the nationality, they will consider themselves as British people because they, they started here from the primary school...either they’re born here and were born here and, or they’re brought up here and then they don’t have anything, don’t, any knowledge or idea about our countries and what about their future?” (GF1, Female, Middle East, 40’s, EU Citizen).*

Finally, the issue of family ties was also mentioned by one respondent (GM13) who looked upon the acquisition of citizenship in an entirely instrumental way. He had lived apart from his wife for over 10 years and was very specific in his reasoning for taking citizenship, to bring his wife to the UK to live with him.

#### 4.2.7 Lack of Choice in Decision Making

As our analysis above suggests, there were a number of instrumental reasons for becoming British citizens. Nevertheless, a striking issue raised by a number of our interviewees was the feeling, not that citizenship was desired or natural, but that there was little choice involved. For some this was because they were effectively stateless and so they felt they needed some sense of citizenship. As one lady explained:-

*“if I had walked in the (country of origin) Embassy when I got my indefinite stay and they give me a (country of origin) passport, I would not...I don't think I would have paid seven hundred and so much pounds to get a British nationalisation...it was my own decision to become British, I wasn't forced into it, but in a way I was, if the (country of origin) Embassy had given me a (country of origin) passport, I would not become British, so sometimes the circumstances lead you to it that way” (GF10, Female, Southern Africa, 20's, British citizen).*

In this instance, a rejected application for citizenship of her country of birth left this individual with no other option but to apply for British citizenship. However, for others the lack of choice was more prosaic. Having not made the conscious decision to come to Britain, and/or having little ability to go elsewhere, becoming British was something of a Hobson's choice. One respondent stated that “happy here but not choice. To be a British citizenship or to change your passport or to change your, your citizenship, that's come into your life without your choice, this has come to you, my life without my choice, if this ship stop in America or stop in China I'm not going to say I'm British, yeah” (GM3). Another stated that “No choice - I just consider myself...if I'm a British, I'm a British... Yeah because there is no, there is no two choices. I choose to become British because I will not have a choice” (GM7).

#### 4.3 Drivers to Citizenship – Security and Fear

##### 4.3.1 Introduction

Not surprisingly given the nature of refugee journeys, one often mentioned reason for seeking citizenship in this research were the mutually reinforcing notions of gratitude and sense of security seen as coming with citizenship. Joining these positive dimensions was the issue of fear; fear of immigration rule changes resulting in them losing their existing status and fear of not being able to successfully integrate without citizenship, a return to the tool or reward debate highlighted above (Jurado 2008). Although other migrant groups may face uncertainty over their legal status, it should be noted that this is likely to be more pronounced in relation to refugee populations for two main reasons. First, asylum seekers can face an extremely long asylum process which leads to extended periods of uncertainty. This was referred to by one respondent,

*“being a refugee...it's a long process. You came, you apply, and after you have to wait and it's a very, very difficult to get your papers after that. And I think that many people, after all this...after all that bad day they pass, I think many of them want to become British, to get the passport to be free... to be more free, more relaxed (GM8, Male, West Africa, 50's, Spouse of refugee).*

Second, refugees have no option to return to their home country and so the need to feel safe and secure is more pronounced, as intimated by another research participant, “I don't feel that I'm completely settled, you know, we're concerned about the future and I don't, I don't know why but anyone who, who enforced to leave his or her country he still feels he is not settled” (GF1). Such findings replicate those of Morrell (2008), that of citizenship providing a degree of security. These feelings were summarised by one individual when he stated “so I'm scared now, but I'd love to become British because I'm safe. I mean if my politics or my religion or my case is something that happen, I'm gone from my country, so I'm scared, you know. So I want safe really, like as British, or citizen, I'd love

to become” (GM14). This narrative highlights the clear dichotomy and co-existing feelings of security and fear that will be explored in more detail below.

### 4.3.2 Drivers to Citizenship – Safety and Security

Prospects for the future were strongly tied to feelings of security, although it should be noted that several individuals were relatively sanguine about the future. One individual talked of the time he had to wait prior to being able to apply for citizenship. He stated “I don’t know, I can’t grant to leave until two, two thousand and fifteen, am I going to die tomorrow, am I going to die now? No-one grant as people, if I’m living in that time it’s fine for me, I’ll look for my future” (GM10). Nevertheless, the notion of safety and security was repeatedly mentioned by research participants as a rationale for seeking citizenship. One respondent said that his rationale for wishing to be British was simply because “Britain, UK, secure my life”. He went on that “I am safe, certain in this country. Now I can build the future in this country...I cannot see why I can refuse to become citizen in this country. It’s the second part for me” (GM11). Indeed, when one woman who had taken citizenship was questioned about the benefits of becoming British and how this had impacted upon her daily life, she struggled to elucidate tangible reasons. Instead, it was the feeling of security that was linked to gaining nationality, “just for me it’s, there was nothing, there was nothing changed but just a kind of feeling to have the nationality, you feel more, more secure, this is the only thing” (GF1).

Security was intrinsically linked to safety, and citizenship was seen by some as being the only guarantee of safety. “So about the citizenship, when you get your citizenship, it’s more safe than your refugee...When I’m here in this country I’m safe” (GM9). Similarly, another respondent explained “even if they have indefinite leave to remain you would, I mean I would feel secure if I got a citizenship, either I have to be the place where I am being a citizen or at least I have to take some other citizenship...that you can, enjoy or entertain every right that you have” (GM4). Several participants went further to explain that it was the identity

document, namely the passport, associated with gaining citizenship status from which security could be derived. One stated “I will feel happy if I become British because, I will have a British passport and I will feel safe and secure” (GM5). As mentioned in the previous section, passports were linked by many of our respondents to feelings of freedom. However, as indicated here, they were also linked to security, and security had the knock on effect of increasing the confidence of a number of interviewees. One told us that “to get a passport.... so I’m very, very happy now I’m free....And to stay quite here, to stay free here, to stay as a British will be...I feel myself confident with me to live, to do everything I can, be able to live” (GM9). Another respondent who had become a citizen felt that taking citizenship had both the instrumental benefit of providing security when he travelled abroad, and security of status while here. He stated “so, getting that citizenship really gave me that sense of security, kind of, gives me a sense of security, you know, that where you can go back to (country of origin), be actively involved anywhere and you still think that is, you know, you have the protection of the State” (EM2).

In summary, as illustrated above, the notions of security and safety pervaded the narratives of respondents. Nevertheless, this was only one dimension of the stories told and was frequently linked to the particular situations facing refugee populations. As intimated in the introduction, feelings of security were equally tied to real and perceived fears of individuals relating to their legal status in the UK. There was a discernible insecurity of status voiced by refugees which was in stark contrast to the feelings of security expressed by citizens. There are several reasons why refugee groups have a sense of fear but for the purposes of this chapter, two key areas are now the focus of attention. The first relates to the specific policy whereby refugee groups are granted five-year temporary leave to remain in the UK. Secondly respondents made frequent mention of the UK immigration regime that faces refugee populations and the fear that this creates amongst individuals. Each is now explored in more detail below.



### 4.3.3 Drivers to Citizenship – Five Year Refugee Status

Talking of the benefits of becoming a British citizen and gaining permanent status, one individual explained “I would say the benefit of being a British citizen could be one, psychologically, okay, psychologically you are satisfied...you feel sane, okay, you feel and psychology you are stable, okay, and you feel like this immigration issue is now closed, alright, so this is very, very important” (GM17). The corollary of this feeling of security and confidence was the feeling of lack of control and lack of security during the limited period of leave that refugees have. The lack of security felt by individuals was directly attributed to the five year status granted to refugees in the UK as one individual explained, “well I don’t have a mind if I’m allowed to stay at the end of the day, it’s the Home Office decision, it’s not mine, if the Home Office giving me five years to stay” (GM3). One respondent said that “I don’t know what will happen after five years. But it’s a long time, five years, you know, it’s a long time” (GM10).

One woman saw the present period of five years temporary leave to remain as a period in which she, and more importantly her children, were unable to participate fully in society. “I want to finish quickly five years with my children to get citizen, then to be in part of the Scottish people and I have chance to vote, I have chance to get Government as I like. I don’t know what’s future” (GF9). Another woman agreed, pointing to the stability that permanent status would bring her, when saying “and more secure and more confident because now we have... we have for five years and after five years we don’t know what’s happened” (GF5). Finally, one citizen who has been in the UK for well over a decade commented on the five year status of present day refugees. Not only did he feel there were practical difficulties related to such temporariness, but he also felt that in terms of integration, elongating that period could have the unintended consequence of turning those refugees against the Government, or even more problematic, the society. He explained :-

*“I also think that’s a very long time, for five years, for example, you can have more children here, you can...your children grow up and so on and it’s different situation than when they’re first here...And*

*if you are not able to be sure that you are here it’s very difficult really, and it’s also make maybe some time that people became against that system, against that society and so on because I think it’s not necessary if you...okay, it should be some prerogative if government or some organisation who are working with that need to prove something or so, but different in five years” (EM1, Male, Europe, 60+ British citizen).*

### 4.3.4 Drivers to Citizenship – Fear

Fear of rule changes was a recurrent theme in many of the interviews and this was closely tied to feelings of (or lack of) security. One interviewee stated that:-

*“Now I’m refugee, I don’t know...maybe now a change of Government, new system now, everything new, everything change...When you have a British passport you have a, like, guarantee of your right to stay in this country...no guarantee to stay here. Maybe after one, two days say sorry. Maybe you have to have a document or you’re at once back to your country” (GM10, Male, Middle East, 20’s, Refugee).*

These feelings were expressed by individuals with five year status, but one citizen also explained that it played some role in his earlier decision-making. He stated “the worst things that I couldn’t live here and that I always was unhappy because of the possibility to take off that status” (EM1). One refugee talked of the impact that rule changes had already had on him, pointing to the delay that had been enforced by the move to temporary leave to remain. She said “changing rules and law, two thousand and six, and when I received it rule was changed for five years, if it rule wasn’t changed I can’t be like indefinite leave to remain” (GF5). She was somewhat perturbed that had it not been for the move to five year status she would now be in the position of applying for citizenship, whereas the change had extended her period of flux.

Fear among refugees about what will happen if rules change, what will happen at the end of the five years, and what happens, or more pointedly what does not happen, during those five years was therefore a commonly expressed feeling. These feelings are particularly pronounced for people with children. One woman told us that:-

*“it will have an ability, sorry an impact on my long term probably...because I would have to set myself a timeframe, well within this five years this is what I can do and this is what my child actually can do, so it will be hard for me to plan for like university for my child, you know, so, so I think as time goes on, as it comes nearer to the five years then I will start thinking about my fear again of going back to where I come from because of my little girl, so, so yeah, I think that that would be, that would be the impact” (GF4, Female, West Africa, 20’s, Refugee).*

Nevertheless, it was interesting that even individuals who had secured permanent refugee status still voiced concerns over changing immigration rules and regulations. When asked why he decided to become a British citizen rather than remain as a refugee, one individual explained:-

*“rules change and if you don’t become fully British or become naturalised and fully British then at the back of your mind you might think, at some stage, they might revoke your status or the rules might change. If the rules change then it might affect you, so just as a completion of your journey, you see, you prefer to be on the safe side and to be on the safe side is to be fully British citizen...you never know what will happen after a month or after six months or after a year, always rules and regulation is change, especially in the Home Office because a lot to do with immigration and politics and things” (GM17, Male, East Africa, 40’s, British citizen).*

Thus, fear of changing immigration rules led to the decision to become British being taken much sooner and quicker. As well as a general fear of immigration regulations changing, there was an explicit fear of being deported from the UK. One can hypothesise that this is perhaps more pronounced amongst refugee groups who are unable to return to their home country. One woman stated about her decision to become British:-

*“because you don’t have that peace of mind that everything...you know you’re going to have to reapply for these things, I mean, obviously, I once had that temporary leave to remain and I just wanted to know when it expired, am I going to stay*

*or are they just going to pack me up and take me back to (country of origin) and if they do, where am I going to start from?...I feel secure, you know, now I have a status I can stay here permanently and leave here not to worry about all the rules and regulations that change all the time about immigrants, that’s the one thing I feel, yeah” (GF10, Female, Southern Africa, 20’s, British citizen).*

Similarly, the following two individuals talked about the potential revoking of legal status and being forcibly returned to their home country. One man said “yeah, I don’t know, I mean like I come forward as a British, as safely because the Home Office has give me, is it five years, a paper. If he want or if he do something, he take my visa. So I think I become like as a British” (GM14). The following man talked of taking citizenship “because of uncertainty about whether I will stay in the UK or not or whether the Government will deport me at some point” (GM18).

This analysis seems to suggest that even with permanent refugee status, there is continued fear amongst refugee groups and that a sense of security can only be derived from gaining British citizenship. Furthermore, it appears that the indirect consequence of the many and varied changes and restrictions in UK asylum policy has been to create fear amongst refugee groups. The result is that citizenship is seen as the only way of guaranteeing permanent residence in the UK. Clearly linked to the five year refugee status, this leads to a form of citizenship by default and may not act to create the ‘active citizenship’ and cohesion the Government claims it wants from citizenship provisions.

## 4.4 The Process of Becoming British

### 4.4.1 Introduction

All countries make requirements of those who seek full admission into the political community, although there are variations in processes across liberal states. Some common requirements for naturalisation policies include residency requirements, language proficiency, acceptance of dual nationality and naturalisation tests (Hampshire 2010; Castles and Davidson 2000). Understanding and exploring the practicalities of becoming British citizens was a central part of the research project. This concerned where people gained information about the process, if anywhere, and the process itself, including barriers to making an application. This research also sought to explore the relationship between legal citizenship and sense of integration within society which do not always necessarily correlate (Ip et al 1997). This is an important area of investigation given that the English and Life in the UK tests introduced under the 2002 Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act must also now be taken by individuals when applying for indefinite leave to remain. Indeed, this was raised by one individual, “I also must do this test for my indefinite leave to remain. Because the people who are getting the indefinite, first so they are going to take the test for this as well” (GF7). Views were sought from participants on the process of becoming citizens and a variety of opinions were gathered. Barriers most readily identified were cost and various issues concerning the tests. This was summarised by one participant when stating, “the test might be tough for someone to pass, the test might be one factor and the cost of being naturalised, especially nowadays, I heard it is expensive...or like not getting good advice might be a factor as well” (GM17).

There were notable objections voiced towards the processes of citizenship acquisition. When asked to summarise the whole process of applying for citizenship, one respondent, who had reluctantly taken citizenship, stated that “It’s rubbish, to be candid...it’s just a ceremony, to be candid, just ceremonious things that we done there and that’s it...It didn’t mean anything” (EM2). Likewise, another interviewee said “they help people to

become British but they do not help people feel, to feel British” (GM1). During the research there were a variety of positive and negative viewpoints expressed on the English test, Life in the UK Test and citizenship ceremonies. These are explored in more depth below. A key question about where people access information about the process is discussed first.

### 4.4.2 Sources of Information about Citizenship

For those who had not yet gone through the application process, knowledge of what was involved was somewhat vague. This was particularly the case amongst those newly arrived. As one individual explained, “let’s say we have not thought about it cause it’s still, we just arrived and we’re just here...yeah we just like the system but we have not come into thoughts about this yet” (GM15). It was clear that individuals had not yet been provided with information from official bodies, as illustrated by the response of one individual, “no, I have not been given any advice about becoming a British. Until now, nobody told me” (GM5). And quite worryingly there was evidence of individuals being completely misinformed about the process of becoming a British citizen. One individual stated, “just, I don’t know, is, I think it’s a law, is it?” (GM14). He wrongly assumed that refugees must become British citizens and did not seem to realise that this was an individual decision rather than a compulsory requirement under UK law. Alongside these cases where individuals had no information or appeared to be misinformed, there was a general awareness that money was involved and that applicants were required to have a certain level of English, as well as some knowledge of living in the UK. Beyond that there were few specificities known. Instead, a large proportion of the research participants were more focused upon their five-year refugee status and what would happen after that time period.

For those with some knowledge of what was required, they were asked their sources of information. As is common among refugee and asylum seeking communities, word of mouth is often used for the provision of much of the information that people obtain. While this is indicative of individuals having communities that

they can seek help from, there are also problems with the lack of any professional advice, with the concern being that the wrong information can be passed on to numerous people. That said, among our respondents, a large proportion who had obtained information had done so either through seeking professional advice or from accessing information online. The following comments were typical of responses. One replied that they had actively sought information, “I read a lot of documents about that, a lot of documents, and there are friends who became British before me, asking them as well. I got some information from them as well. And I was really interested” (GM9). Another supplemented written material with professional advice from the Citizens Advice Bureau. “I know probably because I have had advisors, you know, here, I read the leaflets, the Citizens Advice Bureau, they help with a lot of queries and information that you want to know about, so I know from I can get them and they’ll direct me in the right direction” (GF4).

One reason cited for seeking out information on an independent basis was the significant costs associated with gaining professional legal advice, which could not be afforded. One individual explained that it was unrealistic to expect people to pay for legal advice when they were already burdened with significant costs associated with the citizenship process. He stated “if you want you can go to citizen advice, you know, or you can go to a lawyer but you have to pay certain amount of money you have to pay in addition to paying nearly 700 for the application, and some few pound for test as well. So, you know, why pay all this money” (GM18). Whilst this may be the only choice for individuals, there are several concerns with this situation. One individual related that “any time I read these Home Office websites it’s not, I, somehow I don’t know, I never seem to understand them very well. I read them and they’re not clear cut” (GM1). This means that with a lack of access to professional advice individuals may be misinformed about the process of becoming British citizens and the requirements. As summarised by another respondent, “I think it must be somebody professional or legal advisors or Home Office that would guide them...there is a chance that they will be misguided or they will not be told the right thing” (GM4).

#### 4.4.3 Citizenship Tests

Once information has been gathered, the process for many began with both English language tests and Life in the UK tests. We asked respondents about the tests themselves but also about the impact that these tests would have on their ability to be ‘good citizens’ and to integrate, which was the original rationale for their introduction. First, in relation to the English language tests, there was a general acceptance that the learning of English was crucial in allowing people to operate as fully participating members of society. One interviewee stated that:-

*“I think that people who are living in another country must learn that language because that’s normal, language is the first thing that you can live somewhere, and the good things is here there is a lot of this ability to learn English because a lot of college, schools and so on offer English as a second language for free and so on and that’s very good opportunity” (EM1, male, Europe, 60+ British citizen).*

Similarly another respondent stated, “yes I think that if you want to be British, I think that the first thing that you need to do is to improve your...to improve your English. I think that British English, you can’t be a British citizen without speaking English” (GM8).

Language was thus seen as an important integrative step. One individual explained, “it’s embarrassing as well to say that you are British, but you can’t even speak English language which is, basically, English is the British language... everybody has to learn the language, has to be able to communicate properly” (GM17). Another respondent told us that “many people have a British passport but not speak English, how? You have a British passport, why you not speak English? It should be now your language. But I think I agree with this English test for British citizen, for British passport I mean, yeah” (GM10). Another talked of language classes and stated that “I think positively because, you know, language is a very important tool to live in this host country. You can’t come here and be a burden again, you know” (GM7). This was further explained by another individual:-

*“I had to make sure that I speak with English and that is something that really help you to integrate, because if you can’t talk to people it is almost*

*impossible to access anything. You can't integrate. You can't have friends, you can't access job market, you can't access education, you can't access many service, housing, you know. It's almost impossible. So it was very, very important that I speak English" (GM18, Male, Central Africa, 30's, British citizen).*

So he perceived that to gain access to services and integrate on a practical level, the speaking of English was very important. These views thus reinforced and affirmed the importance of English language tests as a means to facilitating integration in society (Levesley 2008). Nonetheless, it should be highlighted that English language classes are often oversubscribed (Lindsay et al 2010) meaning that an inability to speak English does not necessarily imply an unwillingness to learn the language.

Despite the recognition that English language is important for integration and should be regarded as a requirement for becoming a British citizen, several issues and challenges were raised. The issue of both the educational levels of applicants and their previous language skills was raised by a number of interviewees. One individual noted,

*"the refugees who want to become British citizens might face some problems. One of these problems is the English language. The level of understanding, motives and ambition of learning a new language is different from person to person. You will find some people ready to learn a new language easily. On the other hand, you will find that the language is a big problem for some people" (GM5, Male, Middle East, 30's, Refugee).*

In essence there was a fairly widespread assumption that less educated people, including those who have literacy problems, and people from countries with no links to the UK, and therefore without English being taught in schools, were in a far worse position than others. One respondent stated that "there are other people who are not educated. That's the problem. I don't know how...I ask myself how can they become British, because now everybody has to do that test. There are people here who can't even go to college because they are absolutely uneducated. I don't know how will they become British now" (GM9). Another added that "someone who's, who's not, who doesn't speak that much English may struggle to, you know, to

go through that process because they have to go and learn English" (GF4). Likewise, another stated "yes, yes, it's also the reason that people are not educated and they don't know about the English so that's very difficult for them to take the test and then pass the exam. So for this reason also the many people cannot apply for the citizenship" (GF7).

Another woman pointed to the mental health problems evident among many refugees, and argued that this could have an impact on people's ability to pass the tests. "I know some, some woman, she's, she's quite clever but while its processed and, you know, like psychological for her it's so difficult to learn English because she was depressed" (GF3). An additional barrier with regard to the tests mentioned by a number of interviewees was age, and its impact on learning capacity. One woman commented on the tests thus:-

*"But I can't, I, because my head it's not like sixteen or like my daughter or son and I will spend much time but I never, never will be like...I know rules for English grammar but I can't use them but sometimes when I worried I've forgotten everything, yeah...it's, must be like a level, ages and what education previously, culture, it's much point for doing this citizenship, that's my opinion" (GF5, Female, Central Asia, 50's, Refugee); (GF6, Female, Central Asia, 30's, Refugee).*

Similar levels of positive and negative viewpoints were raised in relation to the Life in the UK test. Some respondents found the test both interesting and useful. One had a longstanding interest in history and simply said that "if you like to project the future you must see first of all the past, and you cannot project your future without your past. It's very, very important...I have idea about the story about the UK" (GM11). Another respondent told us how much he had learnt from studying for the citizenship tests when explaining,

*"The book it's about history, it's about immigration and we just discovered so many interesting things because I thought that Britain is Catholic country and British is Protestant country, so I just okay, it's really interesting, we never, just we never knew about it, so and just, this English test it's not difficult, if you read this book and if you know English that's fine" (GF3, Female, Europe, 40's, British citizen).*

The information included in the Life in the UK test was regarded by some participants as a way to help individuals integrate into society. One citizen stated that it was important to be aware of the information presented in the test if someone was to consider themselves as a British citizen. He said:-

*“they have to know the political system of this country, okay, how the government and the political system is set up, alright, you have to know, starting, like, from the monarchy, Royal family, and the Parliament and all the, like, the political system in this country, you have to have, at least, good knowledge. Otherwise, how are you to live in Britain..It’s not appropriate for you to consider yourself as British” (GM17, Male, East Africa, 40’s, British citizen).*

And for this respondent, it was not only about gaining knowledge but was also related to participation in society, as he went on to relate “I mean, it’s a really good idea, so for somebody who really wants to participate and contribute, even, like, wants to do something or progress, so he will have all the information there in that book, okay, and he will come across it while he’s preparing for the exam. So I would say it’s very useful, okay” (GM17). Another interviewee went further when he explicitly stated “it helps them to, to be a better citizen, rather than being as if, without any knowledge of how you live, at least they learn in, during that period, I don’t know about the test but at least that, knowing about the test at least let them know how to live in the country” (GM4).

With regard to the linkages between the Life in the UK test and refugee integration there were mixed feelings among our respondents. Two women in a joint interview agreed that the test was essentially a question of remembering facts and figures only to then forget them on passing that test. One responded that “Pass test, they forgot everything...I think yes, it’s waste time (GF5/6). Another woman agreed, stating that “I think as people just learn before test and forgot...they need to know something about society, about law here and so on, but they cannot know everything that is in this test because that’s normal, they will learn living here more and more” (GF2). For her, knowledge of life in the UK emanated from lived experience

rather than book reading. A number of respondents also questioned the demands being placed on new migrants to know information that the indigenous community would not.

*“I also saw in the question for citizenship that they are very difficult, and I think that many Scottish people do not know the answer on many of them. There a lot of questions and I don’t know exactly but more than seven hundred, is it?...A lot, lot of questions and I think that many of them are not important...If you are sitting somebody here, especially from different religions, how is it important that people know who is leader in English church?” (EM1, Male, Europe, 60+, British citizen).*

One man was asked to tell us in his words what he had learnt from the citizenship tests. His response was “Who is the queen, for example? And what is the difference of drink drive, and what’s a TV licence, and everything about that”, he added that “it was very helpful” (GM16). However, the usefulness of some of the learnt information was questioned by many interviewees. One woman explained :-

*“it’s things that you wouldn’t know, I mean, the percentage of kids that go to school in the household and the percentage of people that are divorced, that is so irrelevant to me, you know, and I think it’s a con in a way, I mean, all they had to do, if I had qualification to a diploma level, I think that should have been enough for them, to put me through that was a waste of time, because you had to read through the book and you had to pay that money and it’s just all...it was a bit frustrating for me, yes, there were people who couldn’t speak English but that’s not my business, they could, you know, make it a little bit personalised. Why would you have to go through that if you can have a diploma...It didn’t help me at all, it didn’t make a difference, not for me....some of the questions were irrelevant to me, you know, I’m not going to integrate by knowing the percentage of kids that go to higher education or the percentage of kids that live with a single parent” (GF10, Female, Southern Africa, 20’s, British citizen).*

When asked if the knowledge she had gained from studying for the test had helped her to understand the country better one woman portrayed some confusion about the test and the process “No, no, no, it’s not that. I didn’t understand UK more...test when I open they ask me how is the percentage of the woman and I can’t remember, and the Queen and something” (GF9). As regards the impact of these tests on the ability of refugees to integrate, many of the above comments signify a somewhat ambivalent attitude. One woman stated that “this test, it’s not about integration, it’s not about integration...it’s about like just information, about parliament and Britain or parliament and Scottish, parliament and Wales, yes, it’s about Saint Andrew’s Day, Saint David’s Day, Saint Patrick” (GF3). One participant also felt that the tests faced by individuals were increasing in difficulty, with the Life in the UK test having changed significantly in recent years. She stated “first time when the test was, the people who are going to do the test there, it was just 24 questions...now they expanded the book and lots of questions. So it’s also very difficult. I don’t know about how many questions is now, but the book is very tech now. Yes, you should study more and more” (GF7). It was evidenced in the sample that individuals who had an educated background did not see any particular problems with the tests and did not have any difficulties. One stated “it’s not difficult. In my opinion, it was very easy for me, because I was very... I got prepared. Yes. Yes. I read many books before...before the test, and it was very easy. I think that...yes I got all the questions right I think” (GM8). But even although educational status may privilege certain individuals when taking both the English and Life in the UK tests, some felt that educated individuals may be put off taking the test or delay the process due to other demands on their time. This was summarised by one lady,

*“there’s no way they should put that through, you know, it’s ridiculous, I have a friend who has not done that test because she puts it off that much, I mean, she’s at Uni and she’s training to be a pharmacist, or something like that, so she puts this test off all the time because between her books and her work and everything else, she just doesn’t have time to fit in that test and she once opened*

*it and she put it away and she’s opened it and put it away for two years, so I think they should put your education level in account before they make you apply for that and I think they should put your financial situation in account, because, yes, I know another person who is a refugee, she’s been a refugee longer than me but she can’t afford that amount of money for her and her daughter. They should not ask for all that money” (GF10, Female, Southern Africa, 20’s, British citizen).*

#### 4.4.4 The Application Process – Costs

One key issue raised, even among respondents who had become citizens and who had therefore successfully completed the process, was the financial cost of becoming a citizen (Levesley 2008). Although a relatively new refugee, one respondent stated that he had many friends who had not applied for citizenship due to prohibitively high costs (GM16). These sentiments were expressed by a number of participants, “first challenge would be as I think it’s, I’m not sure probably seven hundred or one thousand but yes, it is a high fees, it is when you are normally working and you don’t save up for a citizenship obviously it’s, it is high fees yes, that would be a problem to anyone actually, I have to say that” (GM4). Another stated that:-

*“I had to pay a lot of money, it’s the most expensive thing I own, my British passport, I think, more expensive than any pair of shoes! What I did I waited a year from the time I got my indefinite status and then I had to apply for Nationalisation, well I waited more than a year because, to be honest, I couldn’t afford it, I didn’t apply for nationalisation until December. So I had to...first I had to go for a test to prove that I can speak English, which still costs a lot of money £35, which is really a lot of money, then after doing that test, I had to apply for nationalisation” (GF10, Female, Southern Africa, 20’s, British citizen).*

One individual therefore explained “I will apply when I’m financially able to do that .. I can’t just borrow money” (GM1). So as explained by all three individuals above, the significant costs associated with the process of becoming a citizen have meant that they will or have delayed the process of applying to become British in order to save up the money required. Such delays add to

anxiety, especially with regard to worries about rule changes mentioned above. One key issue, therefore, that came through strongly from a number of interviewees was that they would have had enormous difficulty in paying for the costs of citizenship without financial help and support. Another interviewee with a family also talked of the problems he had faced financially in trying to pay for citizenship when saying “aye, it was not easy because the main problem then is the money you have to pay because me with my family, me, my wife and three children I had to pay about £1,500 for the British citizenship, and for the passport I paid about £400, so it was not easy for me” (GM9). However, he went on to state that the importance of becoming British made him try every possible means of raising the cash (GM9). One woman pointed to the difficulty faced by refugees who were not in employment. She stated that “I’m working now, I can afford to pay on time. If I’m not working, if I’m still on benefit?” (GF9). The difficulties faced by individuals wishing to become British citizens are thus exacerbated by the particular situation facing refugees. Indeed, high levels of unemployment and underemployment make this a serious issue for refugees. However, whilst in work she had managed to save the necessary money in a short period of time (GF9). One man only managed with the financial help of his brother who was already a citizen (GM13).

There is a feeling that the costs of applying for British citizenship have escalated in recent times and there appear to be increasing barriers and hurdles faced by prospective citizens. One respondent explained:-

*“they want to add more difficult things, I think that is not the right thing to do. Yes, more difficult for people. And people have to pay. It’s very difficult. And I have neighbours last year they applied for that, and they were told that they are not entitled to apply for the citizenship and they lost their money. It’s very difficult” (GM8, Male, West Africa, 50’s, Spouse of refugee).*

In contrast to the current regime, individuals think that, “they should make it easy or easier, they should make it easier for people to, somehow,

somehow you feel wanted but somebody’s judged you to, to feel something and for they say it doesn’t go like that” (GM1). Nevertheless, with the current high costs in place, this individual perceives “you are actually telling me in short, here’s a passport, we are selling it to you” (GM1). Similarly, another woman felt that the whole process was essentially a money making scheme “it’s only like make money... Oh yeah, I think it’s waste of time and money for some of the people” (GF2). Nevertheless, she still felt that most people would try to save for this as a means to ending the immigration process.

#### 4.4.5 The Process of Applying for Citizenship

Alongside the issue of costs, there were concerns raised about the application process itself. One woman told us her story of initial decisions being wrongly made.

*“We applied for British citizenship because you, you can apply for British citizenship after one year and if, when you get your indefinite leave to remain you have to, you have to stay for one year with the status and after one year you can apply for British citizenship...our daughter, she got positive answer from Liverpool, so she’d been granted British citizenship and my husband and me we got refusal and it was very strange situation because we are one family and we applied all together” (GF3, Female, Europe, 40’s, British citizen).*

And as outlined above, the costs were added to by this refusal. She further explained “when you apply for British citizenship you pay huge money and when you get answer no, you just can forget about money and that was another point so I wrote letter and they agreed to reopen our case and we’ve been granted British citizenship” (GF3). The relatively convoluted nature of the process of citizenship application was also referred to by a number of our interviewees. The main point of concern was the amount of evidence required. The same respondent continued :-

*“You have to show that you are good person, what you’ve done for these five years because it’s not just so easy just, you apply and they make a decision, as we are asylum seekers you can apply*



*after five years for British citizenship and you have to show what you've done for these five years, so if you, as we were not able to work, okay, we brought all our letters from our colleges, from our volunteering centres, we've just, we've just brought all these papers just and they could see our, each step what we've done" (GF3, Female, Europe, 40's, British citizen).*

She added that you have to deserve to be British and thus the problems in the process were seen as normal. Similarly, one lady explained:-

*"I had to fill in a form, I had to submit a lot of proof that I've been living in the UK, a lot of employment details, P45, P60, so I had to contact National Revenue, I had to contact all my colleges that I'd been to, I had to contact my previous employers, any Social Work department, you know, that were involved with me, it was quite a lot of work, you know, to prove that I've been living here in the last few years and I didn't have any criminal record and stuff like that and I had (SRC caseworker) help me with, you know, organising it, so we sat for about an hour trying to organise everything in different sections, education, employment, la la la, la la la, it was quite a lot. Then I send that through and then waited but that was the quickest thing, actually, but two weeks later they wrote to me just wanting more proof of my work employment, work experience, which is to provide that I've not left Glasgow and because I had not had a passport or anything, I couldn't prove that, so I had to go to my previous Social Worker because I wasn't involved with her any more and she wrote me a letter, she wrote for me a letter saying that she's been in contact with me and she knows that I've never left the UK because I've never had a passport and when I was still in college I saw her on a monthly basis, kind of thing, and I had to go back to the Revenue and ask for all my previous employment slips, a statement, I had to contact the Revenue and then they sent me this thing that shows that I was in employment constantly, so I'd never left the UK and I'd never been out of employment for a long time" (GF10, Female, Southern Africa, 20's, British citizen).*

One individual likewise explained:-

*"It's a question of money. It's also a question of not knowing anyone outside your own community. So in a way basically it is very difficult to basically have, you know, people who will sign your application and you will not get the citizenship if you don't have those. And the other thing is the money as well. I think it's 700 for a single person. It may not be very difficult to find that money if you can work, but for a family - because for a family it's more...so that's main put off people as well. And the people may think let's just stay where we are. We are never going to be accepted anyway so what's the point" (GM18, Male, Central Africa, 30's, British citizen).*

So not only are there significant costs associated with the process but the application form requires certain forms of evidence that may be difficult for refugees to obtain. There are clear issues of concern that people who are isolated and/or have mental health problems may not have this evidence of 'good' behaviour. A final part of the legislation implemented by the 2002 Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act was the introduction of citizenship ceremonies. Several positive comments were noted in relation to this, including "yes I have been to one of the ceremonies of my friends and I have been there and then they promise to not do anything bad to this country and they would be nice people as same as people of this country. I have been to one of these ceremonies. Yes it was very good and it was very peaceful situation. Yes, I like the ceremony" (GF7). Also, "it was very good. I enjoy it. I enjoyed the ceremony. Yes. Yes, it was something very emotional" (GM8).

#### 4.4.6 Reasons for Not Taking Citizenship

We also asked refugees about reasons they, or people they know, might not want to take citizenship. Linked to the discussion above, the significant costs associated with the process were explicitly stated as discouraging people from applying, as explained “it’s a lot of money. You have to spend about £1000 maybe. And you don’t...and you are not sure to get it. Yes. You are not sure to get...that’s why some people now say, no, I don’t like” (GM8). The costs as well as the potential of being rejected were therefore raised as reasons for deciding not to apply for citizenship. One woman answered that the issue of countries of origin not accepting dual nationality was a prime rationale for not wishing to take British citizenship:-

*“Maybe they wanted to save their citizenship and maybe if something change and they go back because some country don’t accept double citizenship...You know, actually I am already disloyal because in my law, in my country, it’s if I away from country for more than three years and not stay in ambassador like, yeah, I will lose my citizenship and I already lose my citizenship because I am nearly eight years here” (GF2, Female, Central Asia, 30’s, Refugee).*

Thus having been stripped of her previous citizenship she stated that she was “like on the middle, I’m nowhere and no-one”. Similarly another stated:-

*“you know, in some countries, you are not allowed to have two different citizenships. You are not allowed to. If you want to get the British citizenship, you have to refuse your previous citizenship. And if you want to go to your country, you have to apply for a visa. It’s something difficult sometimes. Yes. And I don’t think that having a citizenship can block them or can stop them to go to visit their country” (GM8, Male, West Africa, 50’s, Spouse of refugee).*

Likewise another stated “so if they receive the nationality of this country so they will lose their country benefits and they cannot because if any people who live in another country they still have hope to go back and they serve their own countries if they have the opportunity to do. So for this reason also the people stay in their own nationalities” (GF7).

This concern was also expressed in relation to children. One man noted about his children “they won’t be considered as (country of origin nationality) anymore...yes they are (country of origin nationality) and we have taken citizenship but the next generation they would certainly lose that citizenship and they would lose that right” (GM4). There was also a suggestion that knowledge of having committed some sort of crime may prevent some people from applying. One woman explained:-

*“because I heard the people who have crime point, and people who have been in the Court for some crime reasons...obviously if you have anything on your Driving Licence, if you go to the Court from your Driving Licence, because one of our friends has got points on his Licence and then he was refused...Then he applied again, I haven’t been to the Court, but I have got some points. So then the Home Office accept his, and give him the British passport and citizenship (GF7, Female, South Asia, 30’s, Refugee).*

#### 4.5 The Duties and Rights of Citizens

##### 4.5.1 Introduction

The Government and much of the academic attention on citizenship issues, both for long term settled citizens and for more recent arrivals, has been upon the interplay of rights and responsibilities (Powell 2009). This essentially communitarian position has filtered through nationality and citizenship provisions, while pre-election plans sought to take this process a step further through a proposed form of incentivised ‘volunteering’. It was notable among many of our refugee respondents that the gaining of rights and fulfilling of responsibilities was not regarded as being conditional on gaining citizenship status, but rather many considered it important to fulfil their duties and obligations to the nation state as refugees. Indeed, it appears that many linked this sense of responsibility to their refugee status and protection. One respondent in our research placed his responsibilities as emanating from gratitude for the protection received:-

*“I really appreciate everything done for me because I was supported. I was not totally thrown out to the street. I admire this and it’s my obligation to know the rules and the rule of the game in this country... integrated mean, my definition it means to know the rules and laws and regulations of the host country and to live and to prepare to live according to that, to observe that and when you integrate and to speak with the host community, to live with them, to try to help....You know, to give and take with that society. If you don’t give you can’t take” (GM7, Male, East Africa, 40’s, Refugee).*

Likewise, another explained, “the duties of a citizen is, like, Britain is my country now, so I have to be able to say to Britain what I did to this country, because this country now, gave me the opportunity to work and live peacefully, okay, and, you know, in return it makes you feel like what have I done, what should I do to this great country, to this great nation” (GM17). What this demonstrates is that whilst individuals recognise the rights associated with refugee status, there is an equal reciprocity felt towards individual duties and responsibilities whilst living in the UK. It is not, therefore, necessarily citizenship that results in ‘responsible’ citizens but duties are taken by individuals even before they become British citizens. These duties were likened by some of our respondents to ‘nation-building’, akin to the Labour Government’s perspective (see John Denham 2006 in Section 2.4)

#### 4.5.2 The Rights of Citizenship

Equal rights, particularly in relation to employment and education, were held to be important rights based results of citizenship. As discussed earlier, the desire for equality or sameness was a key factor in the decision making of many of those in our sample. One said simply “If I be British, same you. I have to work same you or I can universities like you” (GM16). This feeling of educational opportunities opening up was widespread. One man talked of the dual impact of citizenship on both work and educational opportunities. “Yes you can work, you have more rights for example if you go to study you have more rights and not like asylum seeker, you can go to university. So it feels as if you’re in your home country, you feel you’re a son of the country and have the same rights as everybody you know” (GM6). Similarly another explained “to be entitled to all

rights that all the British people or everyone here in Britain are entitled to and this includes, like, rights to get in a job and to work and to contribute, pay your taxes and things, rights to go to University...I can get all the equal rights” (GM17). Whether these expectations of equality are always met was not an issue addressed in this study but is worthy of further research.

Alongside the practical issues of employment and work, individuals also talked more broadly of equal rights. One individual noted:-

*“the rights of the citizen, as you know, are freedom and democracy. A person should live freely, work and take an active part in the community in which he lives. A person should express his ideas and thoughts freely without fear and oppression. A person should perform his religious without fear. But a citizen should feel with a responsibility with all these rights” (GM5, male, Middle East, 30s, refugee).*

Refugees starkly contrasted the freedom and democracy experienced in the UK when compared to the situations they had fled from in their home countries. They strongly valued the human rights that they could enjoy whilst living in the UK. Nevertheless, the majority of individuals also alluded to their responsibilities as citizens whilst enjoying these rights. The benefits of living in the UK were therefore not viewed in isolation but rather co-existent alongside the duties and responsibilities of being a refugee or citizen.

#### 4.5.3 The Responsibilities of Citizenship

When asked about the responsibilities and duties of a citizen, many respondents talked about general issues. This was often coined in terms related to the obeying of laws and regulations within the UK system. For example, “just behave, just obey the law and vote, things like that” (GF10) and “to be a British citizen is to follow the UK law and regulations. And for sure in the UK law and regulations there are responsibilities and obligations should be followed and in return there are rights should be gained” (GM5). Individuals felt that they should act as responsible citizens within society and have good relationships with the rest of the community, as explained “to be part of the society, to respect everything, to develop ourselves, to find a job, to, to respect other, to help others” (GF1).

Beyond general responsibilities, several interviewees mentioned specific responsibilities that citizens should meet. There were some respondents who felt that their prime responsibility concerned the learning of English. One told us that:-

*“To integrate is...to learn the language is the best thing. For me, my only problem here is the language because I go to the pubs and myself, I meet Scottish there and I have got a lot of friends myself. You can't meet people on the street but in the pub I go in the corner, I take my glass over and then somebody how are you, where are you from. I explain and then we become friends and I'm learning and I'm integrating” (GM9, Male, Central Africa, 50's, British citizen).*

With obvious links to issues of integration, language learning was felt to be a responsibility among many of our respondents (Levesley 2008). “Yes, to speak English, that's, to speak English that's how, how to deal with other people, how to make a friend, how to make your life easy” (GM3). Another said, “it's the first thing to do, love the country, get involved and speak the language. I think that it's very important if you are British, you have to speak English fluently, yes fluently” (GM8). This was justified by one individual on the basis of significant costs associated with translation services, when she stated:-

*“if you not integrate so you will be always problem for others. If you weren't a British citizen then you must seek or you must learn the language which is the very most important things. It's very difficult always...to book an interpreter for you. It costs money and it costs someone to come and it costs a lot of time. If someone wants to be a citizen, so they should do at least their own stuff” (GF7, Female, South Asia, 30's, Refugee).*

There was a sense that refugees should regard learning English as a personal responsibility as a means to integration. These views echo sentiments expressed by individuals in relation to the English language tests, such as “these tests will help people to integrate within the society because, it will encourage them to study hard and learn the English language and it will encourage them to work” (GM5) (see Section 4.4.3 for further examples).

Finally, voting was mentioned by a large proportion of our sample as a benefit of citizenship. However, over and above this being a benefit or a right, there were a number of respondents who indicated that this was also a responsibility. “If I was eligible to vote I would vote, I would say it's a responsibility towards me to vote but as you know here they don't force anyone to vote...their rules and maybe responsibility towards a law or, you know, stuff like that, yeah, so” (GF4). Another respondent felt that her only real duty was to be part of a caring community. “Probably care about other people, you know, I don't know or vote and choose better party to come, you know” (GF2). Similarly, another lady stated, “should be a nice person who don't hurt the people, don't hurt the government and don't stay and lie and do bad things” (GF7)

#### 4.5.4 Citizenship and Integration

Over and above these more specific and concrete responsibilities that many of our respondents felt they did or would owe as citizens, there was also a general feeling that there was an onus on refugees to integrate. One individual said simply that “I need to be like people here, I need to accept all that laws say here and also that the services are doing here and so on” (EM1). Thus there was some degree of pressure felt to conform to the dominant culture. More directly it was felt to be a responsibility of citizens to be integrated, although understanding of what this means inevitably differed. While some respondents had a very clear idea of what they thought integration would mean, others were far vaguer. There was also a variety of views about when integration takes place. There were some views that integration is facilitated by citizenship, while others felt they would be or were integrated prior to citizenship. This ties in with important questions in the literature as to whether citizenship should be regarded as a potential tool to aid integration or whether it is a reward or end point to signal that the integration of individuals has occurred (Jurado 2008).

There were a variety of stories and opinions regarding the linkages between citizenship and integration. One woman regarded integration as an essentially simple process.

*"If you want to immigrate to this country, just be like in a part of this country and it sounds probably very simple, just go and watch movies, just go to these attractions, it's very interesting...integrate to this country, respect this country just don't stay by your own, you're just in your house and much more, read books, just go somewhere, just be with people, so probably sounds very simple" (GF3, Female, Europe, 40's, British citizen).*

Nevertheless, this contrasted to some very complex stories of integration such as the following account by a woman who explained:-

*"look, I've lived here for a very long time and I did not integrate with African people for a long time, apart from my friends who were my age, but not anybody who wasn't my age or anything like that, I would not integrate with them so it's...I don't even know how I can describe it. It's not until I got married that I started having a community around me, you know, because the circumstances, my husband is from a different country from me and there's a lot of people from his country that live here, so he had a few friends that live here so through their friends, we now have...we are integrated in a very large community of his country. I'm not very integrated with a large community of my country because people from my country, the ones I know, are not of my age, they have families and they're older women and men with family and stuff, so maybe their kids are younger than me which is quite hard...But it's really hard when you're from abroad to integrate with the Scottish culture, it's...there's a lot of things in Scottish culture that are not in my culture, so to integrate in the Scottish culture could be so hard. It was so hard for me, I used to go to work but I would not make friends at work, it would be Hi, Hi, and when I'm out of work that's it. Because they were talking about in work or what they were doing was totally different from me, you know, the fear of trying to fit in as well, I mean, this black girl trying to fit in with all these girls who are blond, it was hard for me, so I did not integrate in that kind of way. It's not until the last two and a half years that I've, you know, found my place, apart from the, you know, I have a family, yes, they're Scottish, yes I integrated with them and stuff, but I did not integrate out of them" (GF10, Female, Southern Africa, 20's, British citizen).*

In order to unpick these stories, a variety of factors and opinions on integration are considered below. First, there were a number of interviewees who regarded integration as an individual issue. One stated, "about the integration. If you want to be integrated you will be integrated you know" (GM10). However, there was also an assimilationist slant to his perspective. He went on that "I try to make my life same like British people. That makes me more and more integrated. Respect the rules and make you more and more integrated. So when you have Scottish friends, it's become for you more easy to be integrated you know" (GM10). Another explained, "I think for me I decided earlier on...I'm going to make this country my country and I'm going to try to be successful in this country and I'm going to use every opportunity I have available to me as this country can afford me basically to better myself and to contribute to the society that I am in because not everywhere is you have that chance" (GM18). Likewise, other respondents talked of having to 'accept the culture' of the UK (GM14) and adapting personal behaviour in relation to this. These individuals were clearly of the opinion that the onus for integration is upon the individual refugee. It was their personal responsibility to adapt and change their behaviour in order to integrate in the UK. And the obvious conclusion to draw from such attitudes is that any evidence of refugees failing to be integrated within society was due to the failure of individuals to take the necessary steps to adjust their behaviour or actions.

For others, the process of integration involved more than individual actions but was linked to community engagement. So alongside the solid and practical integration domains such as education and employment (Ager and Strang 2004), involvement in various community activities were seen to be important for integration. One woman stated "for example for me, I'm living in this country, I'm living in this society, in this culture, I'm supposed to respect, take part as, as far as I can" (GF4). This involvement in society was key to many people's perspectives. Another woman thought this involvement was very simple. "For me now Britain my home so integrated to, I mean yourself safe and happy" (GF5). But for some, it went further than this,

*“I don’t think just integration is just making them to live here but making them to be part of what they are and making them to part of the community or the society, you might, you can still live in the community but still be alone, feel lonely or solitude, so it’s not just if you give a document and say that okay you’re now integrated into the community but as if there are opportunities as volunteering” (GM4, Male, Asia, 20’s, Refugee).*

This comment highlights the importance of meaningful community engagement (including bridging and bonding linkages) rather than merely granting citizenship status and assuming that this will lead to local integration. The value of integration at the local level within communities was also stressed by several individuals. One man explained:-

*“to integrate I think that is to get involved. Yes. When you live for example in Gorbals, you have to get involved, yes in the community.. I think that it’s a very good thing to do first of all, but very difficult. It’s very difficult because you know, I have neighbours, during two years no hello, nothing, nothing, nothing. But one day...one day we have a chat, you know, and now we are good friends. You know, I think that sometimes people are very...very retracted. They don’t want to know the others. And they have some bad ideas, you know? And when they get contact they say, ‘Oh, he’s a good man.’ And then you become friends. I think that we have to speak. Yes. You have to speak. You have to say hello. It’s very important. Sometimes you said hello, and you didn’t get answer. Sometimes yes. You say hello. No. I don’t know you. I don’t...it’s very difficult” (GM8, Male, West Africa, 50’s, Spouse of refugee).*

Another woman stated “you want to be part of the community, whether it’s community gatherings or sports or, you know, just be part of that culture, you know, just contribute something towards that culture” (GF4). That cultural exchange is seen as being a two-way process. With regard to the role of the authorities she stated that,

*“they could actually probably encourage the refugees to, you know, express their, I don’t know, not expect but encourage them to also make use of their culture, for example probably in the process of integration there could be like some sort of a community gathering or something where all different nations, nationalities, refugees can come there with, you know, be able to do what they would have actually done back home, not bad things but good, part of the culture” (GF4, Female, West Africa, 20’s, Refugee).*

Thirdly, the question of the relationship between citizenship status and integration was raised by several respondents. One man felt strongly that the rights associated with citizenship, or more pointedly the ability to action those rights act as an aid to integration. “Well I candidly think that if you give people citizenship they will integrate more, that’s what I think...integration is not actually in relation to human relations, you know, for me, I don’t see that, I just see it as more a structure within and I know that if I’m British I can apply for any job, you know, I can go for anything that I can do. So I, kind of, see that my chance has been enhanced that way” (EM2). Likewise, another woman said that “I think we can say you need to integrate in the society to be a British, you need to, you need to integrate” (GF1). These participants therefore perceive that there is a strong relationship between the integration of refugees and gaining British citizenship. In contrast, however, some interviewees felt that it was possible for refugees to integrate without becoming British citizens. One British citizen explained the importance of locality:-

*“you don’t have to be British to integrate because you can integrate in the area where you are living, if there was a community in your neighbourhood, you see, the area where they are living, it doesn’t matter whether you are a refugee or someone with residency only or status...integration is about living together as part and parcel of the community where you are. So it’s not about citizenship, okay, being a citizen, yes, it gives you more chance...like other additional opportunities but to integrate, you can do it without being British” (GM17, Male, East Africa, 40’s, British citizen).*

One man who stated that integration precedes citizenship was also clear that integration is different to the present drive to assimilate. “Integration in some society does not mean assimilation, I am totally against assimilation because it doesn’t matter that I became citizen but I have to have my background like language, culture and so on because I never forget my past and my background” (EM1). Another woman agreed that citizenship does not necessarily lead to integration. Asked whether integration happens as a result of citizenship she stated that “I think it’s happened before, it’s happened before” (GF4). Indeed, another man argued that he and many other refugees already perform the behaviours required to integrate. He said:-

*“integration is about even having respect for the other person, having respect for your neighbours, having respect for colleagues at work, it’s...that’s what I was part of, okay, so I already have that...in my neighbourhood where I do things which other people do, I can go and play five a side, I can go to the pub, I can go and watch football, you know, these are all the things that make me interact with them” (EM2, male, West Africa, 40s, British citizen).*

For him the problems in terms of integration were due to the restrictions based on migrants’ ability to do certain things, from employment and education as well as the attitudes of the majority population (Mestheneos and Ioannidi 2002). These viewpoints therefore question the assumed relationship between integration and citizenship.

## 4.6 Citizenship, Identity and Belonging

### 4.6.1 Introduction

A final key part of this research project concerned the relationship between citizenship, identity and belonging. It was assumed that belonging was temporal, that people were unlikely to feel that they belonged immediately on arrival but such feelings may emerge over time. Identity was thus assumed to be fluid. The existence of multiple identities was assumed (see Rutter et al 2007 on dual identities) but there was also a need to examine identity construction and change alongside legal status. As highlighted in the literature review, the historical basis of citizenship in Britain has been a legal one. Additionally, Britishness is a political rather than cultural identity. This interaction between the psychological and the legal was directly addressed by one interviewee who located his identity with the official status that he has. When asked what his identity was he stated that “for example at the moment you have a look at my immigration essay document” (GM16). Asked whether he felt able to identify with both Britain and his country of origin he stated that “I have no idea but in my immigration essay document writes there, for example, (interviewee’s name), blah blah blah, and nationality, (interviewee’s country of origin) (GM16)”. Others saw British passports as allowing the emergence of a British identity, implying that there was a need for official recognition of identity construction. “To be honest everything change when I get a British passport. Example, when I’m walking I’m walking like that” (GM10), at which point he puffed his chest out. Thus official approval was seen as inculcating a sense of pride and associated identity.

### 4.6.2 Legal Status and Refugee Identity

Given the linkages between sense of belonging and official legal status, we began by exploring these connections further and particularly the linkages with refugee status and identity. This is of particular interest as the longer term experiences of refugees and the impact upon identity formation has been little explored in the literature. To begin, one man talked of his identity being caught up to some degree in legal procedures. He had essentially taken British citizenship for reasons of ease of travel with his wife and son. He stated that:-

*“in (country of origin), we’ve got this stupid law if you get another citizenship, you disown your civil citizenship and I didn’t want to, you see, so I hang on to my travel document but it got to us, when I have my seven year old son, when we travel in the European Union, I mean...they’ll be out there waiting for me so my partner said “it is embarrassing, we are just wasting our time” (EM2, Male, West Africa, 40’s, British citizen).*

Citizenship for another woman represented an affirmation of belonging which allowed her to identify with Scotland, despite the citizenship being British. Official certification was one means by which she would try to overcome her feelings of not entirely belonging. “I say I’m from (country of origin) but I stay now live in Scotland. I’m not Scottish but I feel like Scottish people...I hope so I be Scottish but I know I’m not Scottish...How can I’m Scottish and still I have refugee statement. When I get citizen for Scottish I say I’m proud I’m Scottish, I’m not (country of origin nationality)” (GF9). For this individual, her identity was contingent and dependent on her legal status. For her, a sense of belonging to Scotland would only occur after she had shed the refugee label and become a British citizen. This sentiment was echoed by another participant, when he stated “the passport it’s good proof to show that you have the, they have faith in you to give you the kind of passport so you feel like you’re part of the, you are trusted to be part of the country, yeah” (GM15).

Nonetheless, there were other participants who questioned the automatic linkage between gaining a legal document and feeling a sense of belonging. One man explained,

*“maybe as time goes by, you start feeling British because the issue of feeling British and being British are completely different issue and I’m British, I will become British but it take me time to share those feelings that I was subjected to before on my way to getting indefinite leave to remain...the feelings and the reality are kind of completely different” (GM1, Male, Central Africa, 50’s, Refugee).*

During the interview he related how he had experienced negative treatment in the UK and particularly noted that his case for asylum had taken

many years to be resolved. He appeared to suggest that these negative experiences would impact upon his sense of belonging and feelings of Britishness, if he were to take citizenship. He stated that ‘feeling’ British and ‘being’ British were different, and although he confirmed that he did want to become British, he suggested that it would take some time before his emotional feelings or attachment would reflect his legal citizenship status. Similarly, another woman who had recently become a British citizen explained that her daily life had largely remained unchanged and she still strongly associated with her previous nationality:-

*“I just feel this (country of origin nationality) girl who is living in Glasgow, who’s lived in Glasgow for a long time, I don’t know...I thought British was going to make me different, but I think I’m still the same, I don’t know, maybe I haven’t used my Britishness in any way to know the difference, I don’t know, I really don’t know...I used to think it would (make a difference) but I haven’t seen it yet, maybe, but not really. I mean, life is still the same, I mean, you don’t walk about with your British passport like this (indicates to forehead)” (GF10, Female, Southern Africa, 20’s, British citizen).*

We were next interested in exploring how sense of identity related to refugee status. This included the linkages between refugee identity, belonging and becoming a British citizen. An interesting aspect of identity definition among many of our interviewees was that there was a feeling that having a refugee identity was perennial. One man told us that “I escaped a problem in my country and I come here and become refugee I am still a refugee here. I consider even so we have the British citizen, but we consider little bit that we still are refugee because refugee means somebody who fled his country for a problem, to escape persecution or problems” (GM9). Another man added that events would always have an impact on how he identified himself. “I think because of what happened, because I never accept that it will be in my country and to me, I’m in my soul always refugee” (EM1). One man talked of a solid and fairly static sense of identity before going on to indicate a desire for a less static one. He also indicated a divergence between feeling a sense of identity and living that sense of identity:-



*“Oh, my identity, now my identity is definitely (country of origin nationality), it’s African, it’s...I still see myself as a refugee for some strange reason, okay...Now, and, again, to be fair, at some point in time I can see I is British or Scottish, I can say that, now, whether I believe in it by saying it is another matter and at times I’m not sure if even if subconsciously will just say it because I think I want to make a point, you know, so, yeah, there all these different ways of relating to a, sort of, identity...Oh it is, it’s quite fluid, and for me, I think it’s amazing, it’s a good...it’s a good way of living, you know, having all these different identities that you can deploy” (EM2, Male, West Africa, 40’s, British citizen).*

Finally, while identifying with certain groups in society, such as his profession, he still felt his prime identities were his country of origin and his refugeeeness. “I think I’d been here for almost, well, it’s almost about eight, nine, years, yes, and still in this country I don’t feel as, you know, British citizen or belonging, I mean, I have some sense of belonging in certain quarters...with people in certain professions I could but I don’t see myself as British and so I see myself as somebody who is still a refugee” (EM2).

In contrast, several interviewees felt there was a key transition from being a refugee to becoming a British citizen, which impacted upon identity. When there was a change in legal status, they felt that they would shed the label and identity of refugee. A British citizen said, “I don’t consider myself as a refugee. I am British now, okay, originally I was an asylum seeker, as I said, in the beginning and then I was granted indefinite to remain and then after a few years, I became a British citizen which is part of the process. So, I was a refugee at some stage but not anymore” (GM17). Another went on to relate “you are a refugee but when you pass that stage and then you got the British national still you’ll be saying you don’t take the point of refugee there, you’re still only talking as a British national...so nobody says I’ve got a citizenship from a refugee but you say I’m a British national or I’m British citizen now” (GM4). He suggested that once becoming a British citizen an individual would

no longer be a refugee, and indeed went further to suggest that someone would not even allude to their previous refugee identity as the route to which they gained citizenship. Several interviewees therefore regarded these legal categories as being exclusive and did not consider the co-existence of multiple identities. One woman said, “it means if you’ve got the British citizenship you are not a refugee. Then for example if now I fill a form so I write I’m a refugee, but in this case I cannot write a refugee, so I can write I’m a British citizen” (GF7). Finally, another lady employed an interesting metaphor to explain the way different legal statuses may be regarded by refugees. She explained, “I think if you are granted these details for citizenship you’d call yourself a citizen.. it’s like you move from one stage to another...it’s like when you’re single and then you get married you don’t say you’re single you just say you’re married” (GF8). For her, when British citizenship and identity begins, refugee identity stops.

The trend to consider legal categories as exclusive and the desire to shed the refugee label and identity by some could be explained by several factors. One key reason may relate to the prejudice and negative treatment experiences by asylum seekers and refugees in the UK (see Sales 2002; Schuster and Solomos 2004). One British citizen said “once you have citizenship the major thing that change is that you have British passport, you can apply for British passport, and you can choose not to be labelled as refugee all the time” (GM18). He referred to the desire not to be ‘labelled’ as a refugee, suggesting that negative experiences and connotations are associated with this label. Another individual went further when he explained, “a person cannot be a refugee for the rest of his/her life. The people’s look is different when you are a refugee and when you are a British citizen” (GM5). He referred to the different ways in which individuals are treated by society depending on their legal status, suggesting that being a British citizen would result in preferential treatment vis-à-vis refugee status. In light of this, it would seem logical that these individuals desired to shed the refugee label when becoming a British citizen.

### 4.6.3 Sense of Belonging and National Identity

There was an interesting divergence for some respondents in relation to their cultural identity and their national identity. The issue of dual nationality emerged from these discussions (Rutter et al 2007). One respondent began, “in my country as well that’s the law there. You can’t have two nationalities” (GM9). Whilst for him the disintegration of his identification with his country of origin came from the rules and regulations, for others it was more emotional. Another stated “I feel I’m a refugee now...I don’t feel I’m (country of origin nationality). All that...all that thing has eroded out of me because all my ties in (country of origin) were discarded” (GM7). Several individuals talked of the way in which their experiences had negatively impacted upon their sense of belonging and identification with their home country. One woman explained, “I thought they were disloyal to me, because they’re not able to, you know, protect my child, so I don’t feel there’s any way I’m being disloyal to them because I’ve just seen the other way round” (GF4). Another man explained, “I need to find my identity here...I hate the place (country of origin), I hate the place because of what I went through for no reason at all...I want to feel both but it’s not for me...I would rather be here I am British or Scottish, personally I would rather be here” (GM1). One woman implied that she had been stripped of her identity. When asked she stated that “obviously I’m a black woman. I’m not British, I’m not (country of origin nationality) so just a woman, black woman” (GF4). There was a sense that her refugee experience had completely stripped her of her national identity and that the only meaningful forms of identity were her gender and skin colour. By contrast, other respondents indicated a far more static view of their identity. While acknowledging that he had fled the government of his home country and therefore felt betrayed by that country, one man’s identity remained bound to that country of origin:-

*“I’m not going to forget or I’m not going to feel any feeling, I am (country of origin nationality), until I’m die I am (country of origin nationality)...yes, there’s no question, I am (country of origin nationality), I was born in (country of origin)...that’s it (GM3, Male, East Africa, 20’s, Refugee).*

Likewise another stated,

*“me for example I’m from Africa, yes, and I’m from (country of origin). And I don’t want to forget it... even when I become British, yes, I should have here in my mind that I’m British, okay, but I’m African. Yes. And I have to do with both sides” (GM8, Male, West Africa, 50’s, Spouse of refugee).*

Identity with his country of origin remained a hugely important factor for this man. There was a sense that without that he would be somewhat lost. Likewise, another said “if I don’t have my (country of origin nationality) citizenship, that’s me, like, you know, lost, totally lost” (EM2). Accordingly this man only took British citizenship at the point where the rules in his country of origin were changed to allow dual nationality. Another woman lamented on how she had lost the nationality of her country of origin but how this did not necessarily detract from her feelings of belonging. She said, “losing your (country of origin nationality), you can still have that at heart and that, I mean, no one’s going to take that away from me...because that’s where I come from, that’s where I was born and even if I’m a hundred and twenty years, I’ll still be this (country of origin nationality), person...so I am proud of where I come from” (GF10). She explained that she could still have a sense of identity ‘at heart’ even if from a legal perspective she had lost that form of citizenship.

Other respondents also alluded to the connections with their country of origin and talked about being unable to detach from these. One man talked of his dual identity. He pointed to the temporal dimension of his identity in stating that “as I live 50 more years in my country where I was born and worked and had everything, so it’s really very difficult to forget all my background...But because of the bad things there and also they are still very bad and I don’t like to think too much about (country of origin)” (EM1). Another man said:-

*“well, I’m both [laughs]. Because I cannot dissociate myself from my background and, you know, people will...even at work, yeah, you know, I’m obviously black [laughs]...my accent is not local accent, it’s not like British accent, so in a way they have constantly reminder that, you know, yes, you are a citizen but you are not...but you are still...your background as a refugee is still with you” (GM18, Male, Central Africa, 30’s, British citizen).*

There is an assumption explained in this narrative that people do not necessarily belong in the UK (due to physical and visible difference) which is manifest in their treatment by others and this in turn reaffirms the assumption of 'natural' connections to another country. This individual went on to further explain the ways in which he deals with multiple identities, which primarily manifest in different contexts. He said:-

*"I think...well, I think it depends in the context. I don't know. When I'm in (country of origin), I feel like completely (country of origin nationality), and when I'm in my community, yeah, I am still...I feel like (country of origin nationality), and the culture, the food, the way we talk - I talk in my local language. But if I'm in environment where basically I'm with British people or Scottish people at work or with friends, socialising with friends, yeah, I'm completely British" (GM18, Male, Central Africa, 30's, British citizen).*

Another group of respondents desired to completely detach from their country of origin identity and embrace their new citizenship status. One stated, "I still have feeling towards (country of origin) but my biggest feeling and my biggest love is to Britain because it's Britain who is my home and my country at the moment" (GM17). Another man wanted to take on British citizenship as a complete replacement for the citizenship and culture of his country of origin. He wished to be a Scottish Muslim. "When you get this British citizenship or Scottish citizenship you feel more and more you are a son of the country you know. So for me, my country I forget it. Because all that happened with me there so I forget it" (GM6). This was further explained by a man who felt that religious identities superseded national identities, "for my viewpoint the national identity is important but it can be changed while the religious identity is important but it cannot be changed" (GM5).

#### 4.6.4 Children and Identity

While there were few differences evident in responses by gender or region of origin, there was a subtle but significant difference between respondents either with or without children. When asked about the process of becoming British citizens, many parents linked this decision to their children's future. One woman said, "the problem is about to have a nationality of, of the country, the problem is, I told you about the settlement, for me I'm thinking about, as I told you about my, my children's future...it is important for them to feel they are secure to a part of their, of the society" (GF1). She was clear that her decision to become British was directly affected by her desire to secure her children's future. Whilst this is not a legal requirement for children, parents felt the need to have a secure legal status in order to guarantee their children's future, in terms of practical issues such as education but also to develop a sense of national belonging. Despite this, there are still different loyalties or feelings of belonging which exist within families. One man stated that:-

*"It's not easy to give up a culture. It's not easy to give up culture. Now we have to be careful because we have to observe the law here, we have to observe carefully the law here, but we can't give up the culture. We have a culture. Especially people who are getting old like us. It's very, very difficult. My children, now they've forgot all about (country of origin), they've forgot all about Africa. Now they are thinking like every British, every Scottish, every Scottish children. They are thinking like them. But me, it's very, very difficult because myself...even to master the language is still a problem for me. So it's very, very difficult to give up a culture" (GM9, Male, Central Africa, 50's, British citizen).*

He therefore saw the distinction between his identity and that of his children. Indeed, many parents identified a clear distinction between themselves and their children in terms of national identity and sense of belonging (Valentine 1999). One woman explained that, "we still may feel we are from another country and we are foreigner to this country...the children who were born here so then because they don't know about their parent's native countries, so they feel they are from here...

they don't feel they are foreigners because they are born there" (GF7). In a similar vein, one parent who struggled to feel a sense of belonging in Britain stated that things were very different for his children. For them,

*"they are already British. They were already British before to receive the nationality because, for example, the English I'm speaking, if they are speaking between them if I don't see them I don't know they're my daughters because they are completely integrated...They are attending school so they have friends, Scottish friends who come at home, so they are really integrated. They were British before they receive their British nationality" (GM9, Male, Central Africa, 50's, British citizen).*

However whilst it appears that children do integrate more easily than their parents, this is not without its difficulties. One man said "well my...my children, first problem is, they came here when they were very young. And my...the elder, yes, he's very... he's a very clever boy. He's very...yes, he has two accents. Yes, at school he speaks like Scottish, but at home he speaks, you know?...they're African, but they are also Scottish...they have to manage with two identities" (GM8). The identities of refugee children are therefore an important area for further investigation (Valentine et al 2009).

#### 4.6.5 British and Scottish Identities

When asked to define their sense of belonging in Britain with what they understood Britishness to mean, one woman related her answer to the protection she had obtained and the freedoms she felt inherent within Britain.

*"I would say it would be hard to define it because there is, there is a collective meaning to Britishness but...in my opinion probably it is, you have a, okay a sense of freedom, they are very humanitarian, they respect other people's, other people's in terms of is it religionwise, it is ways, is it, you know, it's just, there's so much, I don't know, I don't know how, what one sentence I can use to describe Britishness" (GF4, Female, West Africa, 20's, Refugee).*

While a number of our respondents indicated that they felt attachment to their locality, and a large proportion stated that they felt that Scotland was

a friendlier place for refugees than England, there were a number of respondents that did not perceive there to be any real difference between Britishness and Scottishness. One stated that:-

*"culturally I mean I could be wrong but I think there isn't that much difference between here and England so I, I don't know how to answer that question but as far as I know, as far, in my opinion I didn't think there's much difference but the only thing is that I know that Scottish would like to be independent so if you become Scottish eventually you won't be part of Britain because it won't be British anymore, is it?" (GF4, female, West African, 20s, refugee).*

Another stated, "I know that Scotland, England and Wales are all under one government...the rule is one and there is no difference a law for Scotland and for England it's the same" (GF7). Another man talked of his views before arriving to the UK and how this had changed, "it's really when came to find out about these England and Scotland it was quite confusing cause we thought it's all one" (GM15). Similarly, another man talked of how this distinction had only become apparent to him whilst living in Scotland. He said:-

*"the first thing I have noticed was on a cash machine when I saw a little sticker on it saying 'we are not British but Scottish', [laughs] that's the first thing I have noticed it but until then even before I came to Scotland I had no differentiation actually what it is like being Scottish and British until I have seen the sticker and when I see it, okay people talking, 'oh they are English and we are Scottish', so in general to me it doesn't make any difference, I don't know if because I came from, I lived there for a while and moved in here or but still UK, Britain, Britain, so" (GM4, Male, Asia, 20's, Refugee).*

These comments are another indication of the views of many respondents that citizenship and identity are solely official demarcations. Thus Scottishness only becomes distinct when solid political borders change. For other respondents, based upon their personal experiences of living in Scotland, they identified differences between Scotland and England. Nonetheless, it is important to regard these comments with caution, given that

respondents may have never lived in another part of the UK (due to dispersal policy) or have based their opinions on hearsay. To begin, some interviewees identified the cultural differences between Scotland and England. One said “yes, there is a difference. The British people have their own life, accent, costumes and styles. On the other hand, the Scottish people also have their own life, accent, costumes and styles. May be there are some differences in law and regulations as well” (GM5). Another based his opinions on the way he had been treated in Scotland. He related his story in some detail:-

*“well be Scottish is like a completely different thing, if somebody were to ask me explain between the two things here, the two issues of being British and being Scottish, I’d rather think seriously about being Scottish for one, and I’m telling, not telling you that because, it, because you are here, no, this is what I would say and write and sign for, the way Scotland as a country has treated me is so humane, we were fortunate, all those people who are treating me that kind of way they are not Scottish, the kind of people I am talking about are I see my psychologist, I’m talking about my doctor and I’m talking about my housing officer, I’m talking about my Social Worker, I’m talking about my neighbours, I’m talking about the people I meet in this course, they really made me proud of who the Scottish society’s all about, you see, so if I’m, what does it mean, what it means to be Scottish, then I will tell them what it means about for me to identify with Scottish people” (GM1, Male, Central Africa, 50’s, Refugee).*

It is worth adding that this man’s views of England or Britain referred to officialdom. For example, his dealings with the Home Office meant he contrasted that British treatment with the more positive and localised treatment he received in Scotland, which is the result of UK dispersal policy (Bowes et al 2009). Finally, we asked respondents about their identification with Britain and with Scotland. While Britishness was sought, one man said that on being British, he would identify fully with Glasgow (GM11). This view was also espoused by another respondent who stated that “for me I

choose Glasgow because I’ve got like a part of my family, (mentions the place he volunteers) and I’ve been working with them for a while, for ages and I don’t know anyone in England or in Wales or in Birmingham or such as that” (GM3). For him, identity and sense of belonging both revolved around the circle of friends. He stated that “so I feel with them good and hanging around, making a friend, or have, I already made a friend here and I found that is good and part of them I feel like they’re my family, so that, what do you want, what do you want more than this?...I found my family, I lost my family and I found a family and I’m not going to lose them again” (GM3). One woman spoke of her happiness being in Glasgow. “I love Glasgow, it’s like my, my mother, my mother, it’s like my relatives” (GF5). While another woman identified with Glasgow and said she felt ‘more Glaswegian’ than Scottish or British, in common with a number of other respondents, she argued that her accent would always be a key identifier of her difference (GF2). One man living in Edinburgh indicated an even more localised identity. “If I’m going further I am for (local area in Edinburgh), yes, of course” (EM1). Overall, therefore, we found that many refugees volunteered a more localised identity, supporting the work of Stone and Muir (2007). And as illustrated above, this may be related to the warm welcome that individuals receive from people they interact with on a daily basis compared with interactions with the state. Positive experiences at the local level may be in stark contrast to refugees’ interactions with the central state (Levesley 2008), which may go some way in explaining the feelings of belonging being voiced in the Scottish context.

As outlined in the introduction, the key focus of this research concerned refugees and citizenship. Nevertheless, as a qualitative and inductive research project several themes and important issues also emerged. Below we firstly draw some key conclusions from our findings before outlining several recommendations for policy that emerge from these. The initial focus of this work was to understand more fully the reasons for refugees deciding to become British citizens (or not). Figure ten summarises the four key reasons which are drawn directly from the empirical research. We have identified instrumental reasons, a search for security, sense of belonging and legal rights as being the main factors influencing refugees' decisions. Whilst there is some crossover and these 'domains' should not be seen as mutually exclusive, each contains its own specificities.

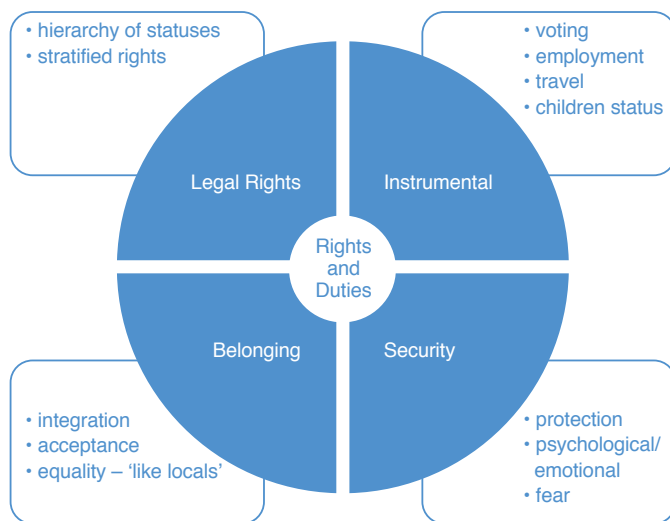


Figure 10: Reasons for becoming British citizens

First, we were interested to explore the importance of instrumental citizenship and how this relates to a sense of attachment to the UK. Morrell (2009) identified three different categories of refugees which are also useful in framing our research. He stated there were refugees that are indifferent who see only practical reasons for citizenship and who experience only practical benefits; the pragmatic who saw practical reasons but who experienced both practical and emotional benefits; and those who envisioned practical and emotional benefits

and experienced both. In our research we too found evidence of these responses to the taking of British citizenship. For some refugees citizenship was not regarded as an important step to integration or inclusion but rather becoming a British citizen was a strategic decision taken to facilitate travel, employment or voting rights. Several individuals mentioned factors related to their family and personal ties as influencing their decision, such as securing their children's future. A number of refugees expressed a desire to be integrated within the UK and to feel part of society, and regarded citizenship as the means of doing so. It should be noted, however, that many individuals expressed a number of these reasons simultaneously. We found it difficult, therefore, to categorise refugees as taking one position and it may be more accurate to regard refugees as identifying their own personal hierarchy of reasons. Building upon Morrell's (2009) work, we also found evidence of refugees who felt they had little or no choice in becoming British citizens. Although they did perceive instrumental reasons for doing so, they regarded this decision as being forced upon them. Finally, not only did our findings echo the work of Morrell (2009) but also research conducted with other migrant groups by identifying instrumental reasons for taking British citizenship (Ip et al 1997; Waters 2009). This may suggest that when exploring issues related to citizenship, refugees can be remarkably similar to other migrant groups in terms of their motivations to become British (or not) and so it would be appropriate to draw upon the wider migration literature when investigating such issues in the future.

Second, we have identified security as being of great importance to refugees when making decisions about citizenship. This key finding relates to the experiences of refugees once granted a form of protected status from the government. Existing literature in the field of refugee studies has focused upon the vulnerability of asylum seekers and the sense of liminality experienced by individuals waiting for a decision from the Home Office (Stewart 2005). Whilst this is undoubtedly still an important issue for attention, this research

suggests that this problem does not immediately stop when individuals are granted refugee status. As discussed elsewhere, the key advantage for the state in granting temporary status is that it retains the option of withdrawing leave to remain and removing individuals at some point (Schuster and Solomos 1999). By granting refugees five year status, after which their cases may be reviewed, the UK government is maintaining control over refugees' future. This provides evidence of the continued constriction of the asylum system and protection afforded by the UK (Da Lomba 2010). This also means that any attempt to encourage a citizenship based on common values will be absent from those refugees who opt to become naturalised for reasons of security rather than values and belonging.

Previous research has documented a strong feeling that government policies on refugees have been unwelcoming and undermined any sense of belonging that is a necessary part of citizenship (Fyfe and Findlay 2006). Not surprisingly, evidence from our sample suggests that the granting of five year refugee status impacts negatively upon individuals. This is not only on a practical level, where individuals may be prevented from entering the workforce, but also on an emotional and psychological level, as respondents expressed fear and uncertainty over their future. Levesley (2008) points out that although there is only a small gap between the rights obtained by people with ILR and those with citizenship, those with the latter also derive emotional benefits from their status. It is clear, therefore, that refugee status does not currently guarantee a sense of security or permanence. But instead refugees must face several more hurdles on their journey to long term settlement and permanent security. As explained elsewhere, "even though they may obtain physical security by coming to the UK, they may not immediately experience psychological security – a sense of being settled and safe" (Goldsmith 2008, 121). Our research found that it can be this sense of fear and the need for a secure legal status that drives refugees to become British citizens. So for some refugees the decision to become British is

not primarily based upon a desire to integrate in the UK, or influenced by a sense of attachment that develops through time, but perceived as the only way to end their feelings of temporariness and give them a sense of security. The five year period of protection can therefore be seen as 'freezing' the lives of refugees, which will ultimately impact upon their integration and settlement.

Third, many respondents raised the issue of belonging, which links to the relationship between citizenship and integration. Previous research has found that the individual personality of the refugee, how they reacted to the loss of their country, family and social status and how these personal traits were experienced in their new environment influenced integration (Mestheneos and Ioannidi 2002). In our research we too found that some refugees regarded it as an individual responsibility to become British citizens and integrate. Nevertheless, there are fundamental barriers to refugee integration from racism and ignorance experienced at both personal and institutional levels, and enforced dependence and marginalisation. From their experiences, some respondents noted there is clearly a difference between access to citizenship, which means getting a passport, to achieving substantial citizenship which means equal chances of participation in various areas of society such as politics, work and cultural relations (Castles and Davidson 2000). This is why many refugees felt that becoming a British citizen may enhance a sense of belonging or inclusion within society. There was a strong desire to be accepted by society, experience equality and not to be identified as 'different'. Nevertheless, as some respondents have experienced, legal citizenship does not always necessarily lead to a sense of full integration into society (Ip et al 1997) and there can be a disjuncture between legal citizenship and personal identity. Indeed, some interviewees noted that even if they are or do become British citizens, they may still experience a gap in terms of sense of belonging.

Finally, refugees wished to secure a permanent legal status in the UK and becoming a British citizen was regarded as one way of achieving this. Given

the time that individuals spend as asylum seekers with no secure legal status and having lost their country of origin's protection this feeling is not surprising. As outlined in Figure 11, some refugees perceived that there were increasing levels of rights associated with different legal statuses (green line). This means that progressing from being an asylum seeker to refugee to British citizen is regarded as a key way to access increasing rights, including legal and instrumental rights as well as a sense of security and belonging. Nevertheless, some interviewees perceived an increase in rights only when becoming a refugee (purple line), whilst others saw similar rights throughout all legal statuses (blue line), and hence they felt there was no real benefit in becoming a British citizen. It should be noted that this graph represents perceptions of rights amongst interviewees as opposed to actual entitlements (see table two for comparison).

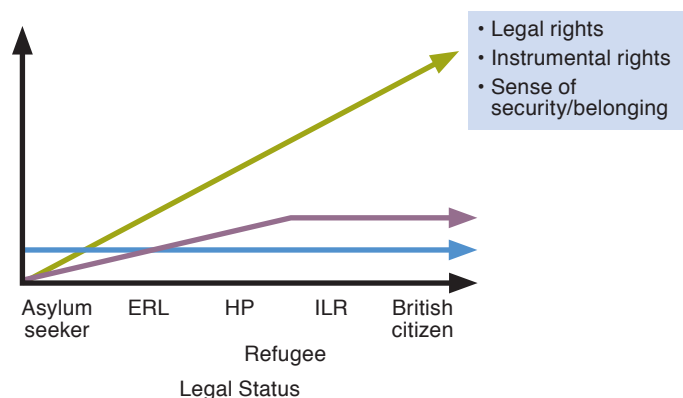


Figure 11: Changing legal status and perception of rights

Beyond the four key topics identified, several additional findings can be noted. This research highlights a number of practical problems that face refugees who wish to become British citizens. A key issue which was repeatedly raised by respondents was the cost of citizenship relating not only to the tests but also the application fees. Given that the government wishes to encourage refugees to take this step, it may be appropriate to consider how this issue could be tailored to the particular needs of refugees, such as providing a reduction in rates or ensuring there are no significant rises in the future. The research also confirmed the concern with the

tests currently required for citizenship, including the English Language test and Life in the UK test. Whilst the majority of participants agreed that language was a key factor in facilitating integration in the UK, other important issues were raised. As stated elsewhere, "at best the (Life in the UK) test will assess the applicant's ability to memorize a number of discrete facts, but it will reveal little about her acculturation on any fundamental level. Moreover, formal tests are likely to be biased against less educated applicants and those from lower socio-economic classes, which suggests that education rather than acculturation will be a surer route to success" (Hampshire 2010, 83). Adding to feelings that the tests are examinations of memory rather than ability to integrate, respondents were concerned that tests exclude certain groups such as the less literate, those with limited opportunities for interaction such as women, and those with mental health issues. Interestingly it was noted that educated groups may postpone applying for British citizenship due to time pressures or other commitments. These are clearly important issues for consideration given the Government's desire for refugees to become British citizens.

Another important topic for discussion in the existing literature that this research addresses relates to whether citizenship should be regarded as a tool or reward for integration. Jurado (2008) has argued that nation states that have social and economic divisions along ethnic lines are often tempted towards the reward model, believing that a focus on identity will aid cohesion. Nevertheless, she argues that states that wish to have cohesive multi-ethnic societies should use the tool approach, with its greater emphasis on equality rather than language and identity. Jurado (2008) points out that when expectations are raised about equal participation, identification with the nation can be dashed when that equality appears distant. Therefore the contradictions in Britain's citizenship policy have contributed to the very feelings of disaffection that today threaten to undermine the cohesion of British society. It is the existence of structural barriers to participation and equality that hinder minority identification with the mainstream, and thus Britishness. In this regard any temporary



or probationary citizenship is seen as creating further inequalities and barriers between immigrant groups and the host society. These issues were raised in this research project. Whilst some respondents felt that they were integrated prior to becoming citizens, perhaps reflecting citizenship as reward, the more common view was that citizenship and the equality that it was thought to enhance, would make integration easier. That said, there were a number of respondents who had already become British citizens, who still felt structurally prevented from operating as full members of society. Thus, while citizenship may aid integration, equality is also required for the integration to be of an enduring type. As in Jurado's (2008) work, a number of our respondents hinted at the realities of a lack of equality having a tangible negative impact on integration and sense of British identity.

Finally, the research uncovered the important role of labelling and in particular the enduring label of 'refugee' (Rutter et al 2007). Similar to the notion of nested citizenship (Russian dolls) whereby individuals can hold different levels of citizenship that are interconnected such as within the EU, refugees can attach multiple labels to themselves. Most striking was either the absolute desire to shed the 'refugee' label versus a very strong attachment to it. Whilst it is logical that some individuals do not want to be associated with a label that has negative connotations (Greenslade 2005), it must be recognised that other individuals, even when British citizens, still strongly hold the refugee identity. For some the refugee identity was perennial and was a key part of who they were. In this sense some refugees were not prepared to shed the label despite its negative connotations. This, and a number of the other findings mentioned above, highlights the importance of considering not only the legal status of individuals but equally sense of belonging and attachment.

In summary, citizenship can serve as a mode of identity and solidarity in modern pluralist societies but equally it can point to the struggles of marginalized groups who do not possess all of the rights of citizens (Kivisto and Faist 2007). Optimistically, some writings on this issue point to the notion of ethnic succession, namely that ethnic minorities will attain entry to mainstream society through gains achieved in successive generations (Ong 2003). Thus, "achieving citizenship is an unending process of struggle against undemocratic exclusions based on ethnicity and race, with the assumption that the social status of a particular minority group will improve over time with cumulative increases in experiences of adversity and material gains" (Ong 2003, 4). Nevertheless, it is an acknowledged fact that many second and third generation BME communities in Britain suffer from higher levels of unemployment and underemployment than their white compatriots (see for example Hussian et al 2008; Blackaby et al 1997). There is a need, therefore, not only to focus upon the vertical, legal axis of citizenship but to examine the structural contexts of refugees as well as the horizontal, everyday ties forged by groups in society. Furthermore, this analysis should extend from the national context to the growing transnational linkages maintained by refugees (Smyth et al 2010). There is clearly much to learn about the interactions between refugee migration and the attainment of British citizenship. We hope this report has gone some way towards increasing knowledge in this area. To conclude, we draw out some key policy recommendations below.

**Improve data on refugees and citizenship:** It was evident from our quantitative analysis that there is a paucity of data (at the Scottish and UK level) which relates to the uptake of citizenship amongst refugees. This is primarily hampered by the lack of cross-tabulation of citizenship and refugee status data. We would therefore recommend that this situation is investigated to determine how this could be improved. Knowledge of the take up of citizenship among refugees would provide valuable data to make comparisons between them and other migrant groups and would assist any future research in this area. In addition, if the Government is to ensure that all residents can become fully participating members of society, it is imperative that there is knowledge of those who may not see themselves as such and the reasons for those feelings.

**Review five year refugee status:** Our research documented the continued vulnerability of refugee groups beyond the period of seeking asylum. Even when individuals become refugees, the five year time limit of their immigration status causes numerous practical and emotional problems. Refugees can be prevented from meaningfully engaging in the labour market and are psychologically affected by being unsure of what the future holds. Limited leave to remain is forcing people into making decisions that may not be in their best interest. This research suggests that the Government recognise the full impact of granting five year status and review the ramifications of this policy upon long term integration and settlement. We recommend that permanent refugee status is reintroduced.

**Review the process of refugees becoming British citizens:** The British Government should ensure that they are aware of the variety of reasons people may have for taking British citizenship. If citizenship can ever act as a unifying bond, it is essential that decision making among the relevant populations is properly understood.

Refugees need clear and concise information about the process of becoming British citizens. There remains too much scope for misinformation, which can lead to refugees making decisions that are not to their long-term benefit.

Tests should take account of the precarious nature and educational backgrounds of applicants. It is unfair that refugees who have little or no formal education should face discriminatory barriers to becoming British citizens. It is also something of an anomaly that refugees from English speaking countries should be in a privileged position to traverse the process. If English language skills are to remain a requirement of citizenship, refugees from non-English speaking countries should receive intensive support in their language learning.

**Review the costs of refugees becoming British citizens:** The costs of the application process are prohibitively high. It is important that the financial position of refugees is not the primary determinant of whether people are able to become British. This research suggests that without familial support, which is not available to all refugees, for many the process would be unaffordable. The fear and reality of rule changes also means that refugees can either enter the process prematurely by becoming indebted, or worry that if they do not have the financial capability rules will change and deny them the option in the future. This suggests the need for a stable period of immigration and citizenship policy.

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**Contact Details**

Scottish Refugee Council  
5 Cadogan Square  
(170 Blythswood Court)  
Glasgow G2 7PH

T 0141 248 9799  
F 0141 243 2499  
E [info@scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk](mailto:info@scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk)



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