

Lessons learned? A critical review of the government program to resettle Bosnian quota refugees in the United Kingdom

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Key issues

The article discusses the management of the reception of Bosnian quota refugees in relation to durable solutions. The Bosnian programme is an example of an ad hoc reaction to specific circumstances, in which Britain initially played only a limited role. The article describes the organizational structure of the dispersal of Bosnian quota refugees; the policy objectives, length and funding; how the policy was implemented through reception centres; the location, size, housing issues and 'critical mass' of clusters [West Yorkshire was one of six]; secondary migration; satisfaction; and community development initiatives to support refugees.

Conclusions

The Bosnian programme had some similarities with previous policies but clearly departed from established practice by creating 'clustered' dispersal. Ideas of resettlement were broadened beyond provision of housing and greater emphasis placed on mid and long-term resettlement support. This new approach had strengths and failings, notably a lack of planning or preparation since earlier attempts at dispersing quota refugees.

Recommendations

The article recommended the need for greater coordination of dispersal programmes and for one agency to be given the long term role of prime contractor to implement and oversee arrivals and to plan for future quotas.

Migrant Group

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