The impact of the recent Covid-19 pandemic on refugee integration in the UK

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Presentation outline

- Cohort study aims and design

- The data

- Integration indicators

- Linkage strategy and data

- Arabic naming conventions

- Covid-19: UK perspective
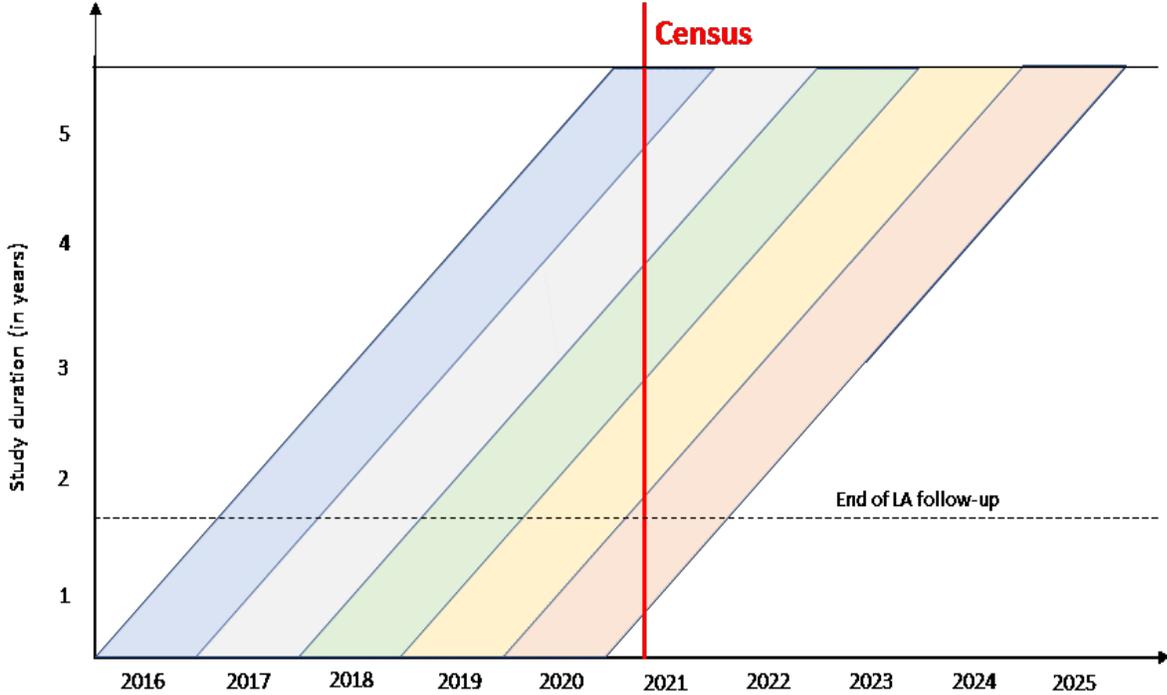
- Timeline for the pilot project

Cohort study aims and design

Pilot study aims:

- Assess the feasibility of linking a sample of Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme and Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Scheme (VPRS/VCRS) data to administrative data

- Develop linkage strategies for different naming conventions

Full cohort study aims:

- Understand social integration outcomes

- Provide insights that inform refugee policy to improve integration outcomes
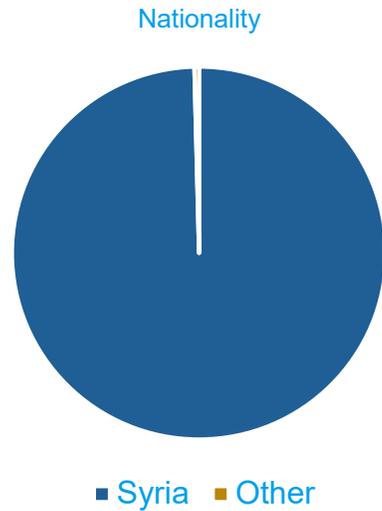

**UK government's approach to evaluating
Vulnerable Persons and Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Schemes:**

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-uk-governments-approach-to-evaluating-the-vulnerable-persons-and-vulnerable-childrens-resettlement-schemes
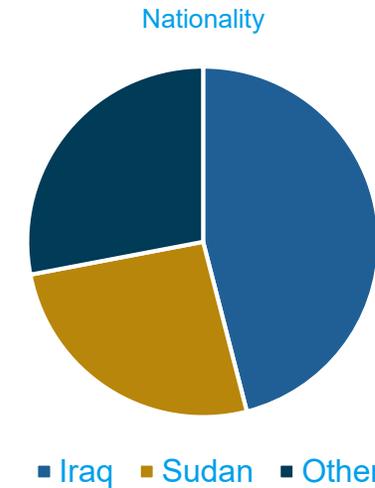
The data

Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme

Nationality

■ Syria ■ Other

Other includes stateless, Palestinian Authority, Lebanon, Jordon, Somalia, Ethiopia, Sudan, Algeria

Persons	20,007	
Males	10,441	52%
Females	9,566	48%

Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Scheme

Nationality

■ Iraq ■ Sudan ■ Other

Other includes Afghanistan, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Palestinian Authority, Somalia, South Sudan, Yemen

Persons	1,826	
Males	872	48%
Females	954	52%

Source: Home Office Asylum and Resettlement datasets
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/910545/asylum-applications-datasets-jun-2020.xlsx

Home Office integration indicators

- **Housing** e.g. type, household size

- **English language** e.g. ESOL level, attendance, progress over time

- **Education** e.g. attendance, English language support in schools

- **Employment** e.g. % employed, employment type (full-time, part-time)

- **Benefits** e.g. % receiving job seekers allowance, % receiving health related benefits

- **Social bridges and bonds** e.g. volunteering, community participation

- **Health** e.g. % registered with doctor, mental health needs

- **Secondary migration** e.g. % moved from initial accommodation

Additional integration indicators:
- **Covid-19** - examples?
- Mortality and cause of death
- Fertility and maternity
- Progression to Higher Education
- Possession of car and/or UK Driving Licence

Linkage strategy and data

Strategy

- Apply standard matching algorithms (deterministic, clerical, probabilistic)

- Moderate these algorithms for characteristics of the refugee data

- Optimise matching algorithms depending on the data source we are matching to

Potential data sources to link to

- **Health** registration   Pilot
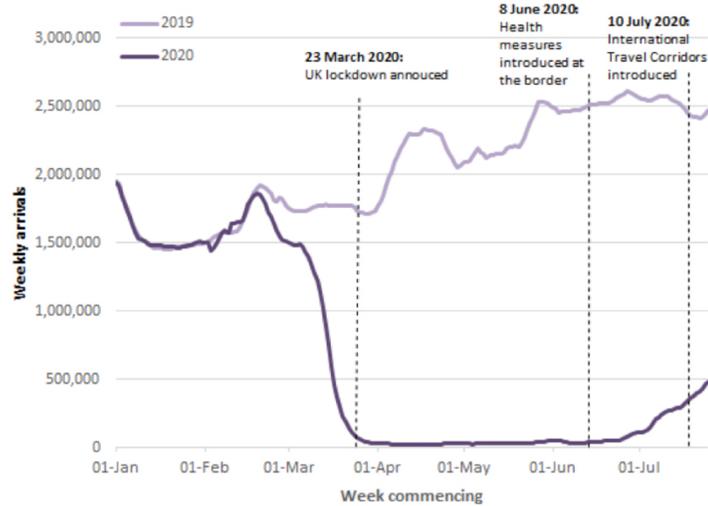
- **Education** including school census, further and higher education, attainment

- **Benefits and income** including employment, pay, benefits and allowances, address changes

- **Driver and Vehicle** registration

- **2021 Census** including self-reported health, household composition, employment, ability to speak English

- **Travel** data   Pilot

- **Births**

- **Deaths**

Arabic naming conventions

- Transliteration challenges due to spelling, characters or dialectal variations e.g. Fahad – Fahad/Fahed/Fahd

- First names can be compound names written in different ways e.g. Abdulaziz – Abdul Aziz/Add al Aziz

- Surnames denote a family or tribal grouping e.g. al-Hammadi

- Patrilineal or patronymic names reflecting generations of male relatives e.g. Ahmed bin Omar ibn Taymur = Ahmed, son of Omar, son of Taymur

- Parents may incorporate reference to the oldest child e.g. Abu Mahmood (Mahmood's father)

- A kunya (nickname) can also be a name given to someone that refers to a region of origin e.g. Abu Haitham al-Masri

- Women may choose to keep their family name. Children may take their father's family name. Family units where husband/wife don't share a surname

- Names changed or shortened so closer to host country names

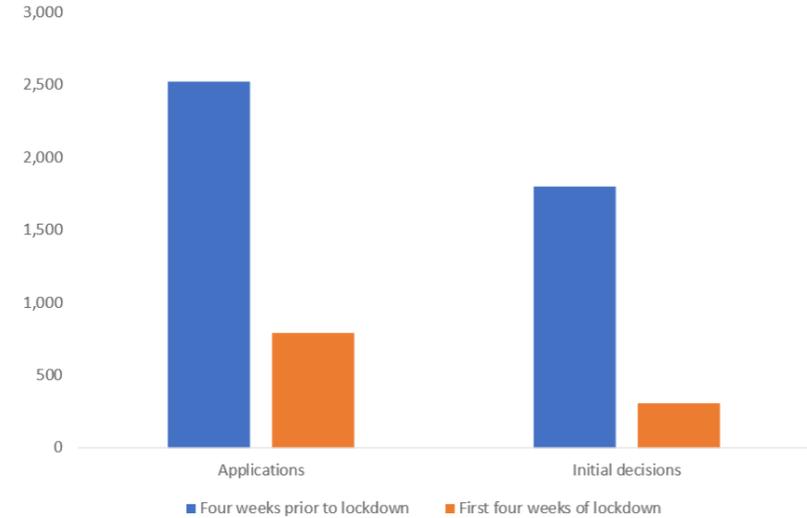- Differences between Muslim, Christian, Jewish or other backgrounds

Covid-19: UK perspective

Weekly air passenger arrivals to the UK, Jan-Jul 2019 vs Jan-Jul 2020

— 2019
— 2020

23 March 2020: UK lockdown annouced

8 June 2020: Health measures introduced at the border

10 July 2020: International Travel Corridors introduced

Source: Home Office statistics relating to passenger arrivals since the COVID-19 outbreak, August 2020
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statistics-relating-to-passenger-arrivals-since-the-covid-19-outbreak-august-2020/statistics-relating-to-passenger-arrivals-since-the-covid-19-outbreak-august-2020

Number of asylum applications and initial decisions

■ Four weeks prior to lockdown   ■ First four weeks of lockdown

Source: Home office statistics relating to COVID-19 and the immigration system May 2020
https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/statistics-relating-to-covid-19-and-the-immigration-system-may-2020

Impact on Refugees:

- It has not been possible to undertake any resettlement activity since March 2020 due to on-going COVID-19 restrictions and pressures both overseas and in the UK

- The Home Office expect to resume resettlement activity when safe to do so

Impact on data sources:

- International Passenger Survey paused 16 March 2020
- Decline in registrations with a doctor
- Hospitals cancel routine operations and treatment
- Home Office issue temporary 'grace' period period/request additional time to stay
- A-levels and GCSE exam results based on teacher assessment
- Furlough schemes to support employers and employees
- Benefits for those earning less than usual - including self-employed, made redundant or shielding

Pilot project timelines

	2020						2021				
	Jan - Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar - Jul	Aug -Dec	May - Dec

1. NSDEC Application

2. HO MOU to Share Data ▲ HO agreement to share data

3. Access Sample Data

4. Data Linkage Review ▲ Feasible linkage strategy identified

5. Pull together pilot results

5. Data Supplier Permission ▲ Supplier agreement to link

6. Dataset Design

7. Maintenance Schedule

8. Costing ▲ Funding confirmed. Dataset built and available in suitable environment. SDC strategy agreed

9. NSDEC meeting

10. Implementation

11. Outputs

12. Access

Legend

▲ Critical milestone

Over-arching activities

- SDC strategy and implementation
- Comms
- Legal
- Quality
- Metadata
- Data curation