Article

Drawing Together in Scotland: The Opportunities and Challenges for Young Refugees within a 'Relational Wellbeing' Approach to Integration

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Abstract: In this paper, we consider how young refugees in the Drawing Together project experience integration in Scotland. We critically examine the term 'refugee integration' and emphasise its multiple dimensions. Specifically, we analyse Scotland's role as a country committed to the protection and care of young refugees by mapping some key Scottish legal, political, social and cultural policies and strategies that provide the contexts for refugee integration as a mutual endeavour based on hospitality and reciprocity. Finally, we show the ways young refugees talk of rebuilding a life in Scotland that feels coherent in relation to their past and present circumstances, and their future plans despite the challenges that they encounter in their everyday lives. We suggest that a 'relational wellbeing' approach to integration in Scotland is tangible. It confirms the importance of the practical and social opportunities available to young refugees as they resettle. This approach extends the meaning of integration beyond its political and social categories, to include young refugees' attachment to their faith of origin as well as the natural environment of Scotland. In all, we suggest that young refugees face the challenges and use the opportunities for integration in Scotland in ways that are of sustained benefit, for them as well as Scotland as their new country.

Keywords: refugee integration; young refugees; Scotland integration; relational wellbeing; Drawing Together project

1. Introduction

Over time, some unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people are successful in their asylum claim and are recognised as refugees. When they resettle into host nations, a powerful dynamic plays out. After long periods of waiting, when they have not been in charge of their movements forward in life (Kohli and Kaukko 2018), they are invited to integrate in a lifelong way into their new countries. There is permission to establish new rhythms and patterns of living. There is, following the elation associated with being allowed to resettle, a dawning realisation that integration is a word that carries multiple meanings (Kohli 2014). It brings opportunities and challenges. It defines much of the actions and reflections in the current and future lives of young refugees as they try to connect who they are with who they will become. On that basis, we briefly outline what we mean by the term 'refugee integration'. In developing our focus on the Scottish context for the Drawing Together Project, we then consider the ways the United Kingdom overall and Scotland are similar and different in giving meaning to the idea of refugee integration. To do so, we summarise some ways Scotland has created its own paths of refugee integration within the turbulent complexities of the UK political context. We then frame some key findings within the dimensions and drivers of a relational wellbeing approach and suggest that the ways young refugees are integrating in Scotland offers some hope that policies are

having a beneficial impact on their lives within Scotland. As observed by one of the young people in the Drawing Together project:

> *To me, Scotland is like a second chance God is giving me in Scotland, and I've been taking advantage of it. To me, Scotland would be like the start of my successful story. When I tell my story to my future kids or grandkids I'll be like, "Once upon a time", and I start with Scotland...Because the things I got here I could never dream of back home. . . . Connections are very important to have in life. Scotland has given me plenty of that.*

Within this hope-filled rendition of life beginning again, the young person is a witness to their own experiences. The past is a foreign country (Hartley 1953). The future beckons. Opportunities arise, not just to do well materially, but to extend networks, create a family, and to live well as a citizen. Arguably, what is underplayed by this respondent is the common everyday struggle to make life work out in ways that are clear, coherent and continuous for young refugees. In this paper, we attempt to show that this working out is fundamentally tied to the ways refugee integration is conceptualised and enacted, not just as a set of behaviours and thoughts by individual refugees, but as part of a process of contextual exchanges with others over time aimed at bringing mutual benefits. We suggest that refugee integration is alive, knotty, challenging, and worthwhile.

2. Refugee Integration and Its Multiple Dimensions

There is, at first glance at least, a simple solidity to the term 'refugee integration' (UNHCR 1951). The 1951 UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees emphasises a right to integration, by placing the expectation on receiving countries to promote access to education, employment, housing and welfare (UNHCR 1951). This can support refugees to begin creating roots in a new country, but does this come at a price? The 1951 protocol refers to the assimilation of refugees, which implies that there is an expectation for newcomers to adapt to the needs of the host country. In the work of Berry (1997, p. 10), assimilation is one of four different 'strategies' of acculturation. This is the process of adaptation, which takes place within an individual and the receiving society. The remaining three strategies include 'marginalisation', 'separation' and 'integration' (Berry 1997, p. 10). Berry (1997) highlights integration as the most preferential form of acculturation. Although Berry's work helped to progress the study of acculturation, and indeed integration, the model has been criticised for placing undue emphasis on newcomers eventually adapting to fit in to the way of life of the host country (Phillimore 2021).

Further developments in the field of refugee integration were led by Ager and Strang (2004, 2008, p. 170), who developed the 'Indicators of Integration' framework. This model outlines different domains connected to integration, beginning with the foundations ('rights and citizenship'), facilitators ('language and cultural knowledge' and 'safety and stability'), social connections ('social bridges', 'social bonds' and 'social links') and markers and means ('employment', 'housing', 'education' and 'health') (Ager and Strang 2008, p. 170). This model continues to be the reference point of integration used by the UK's Home Office (Ndofor-Tah et al. 2019).

In this paper, we suggest that refugee integration contains two main aspects. The first is related to the material and structural resources required to stabilise and develop a replenished life. The second involves making connections with those material elements, with integration seeking out relational and community aspects (see Figure 1). The material and relational thereby co-exist in an intermingled way, maintaining a symbiotic dependence on each other. Thus, for example, finding and tactically engaging with opportunities for and access to employment, housing, education, welfare and leisure lead to finding and becoming embedded within communities, where a sense of belonging can emerge over time. Here, the rhythms and patterns of ordinary life can evolve in sustainable ways for newcomers and their hosts. From the material and structural aspects, Figure 1 shows that resources, tools, and skills are embedded in opportunities where access is controlled in one form or another by service providers. The relationship with service providers and refugees seeking access is, essentially, a vertical one, where supplicants and donors face

each other in order to arrange movements of integration that may be mutually beneficial. Formal and mechanical means of delivering services and progressing through layers of refugee integration become an agreed two-step dance of belonging within the new country. Within the relational/community aspects, the movements of this dance are a little looser and perhaps more organic in their shapes and contours. Here, integration is neither linear nor one way. There are no stories of refugees cutting and pasting themselves into the frames of living supplied by donor communities. Rather, host communities adapt and adopt ways of living with refugees, perhaps through seeing diversity not as a problem to be overcome, but as an opportunity for living well together. Therefore, refugee integration switches from a sense of hospitality, to one in which reciprocity creates mutually beneficial outcomes. In these terms, integration is liquid rather than solid, pouring itself into the containers of law, policy and cultures of understanding created at the level of the state, the region or the locality in which refugees live.
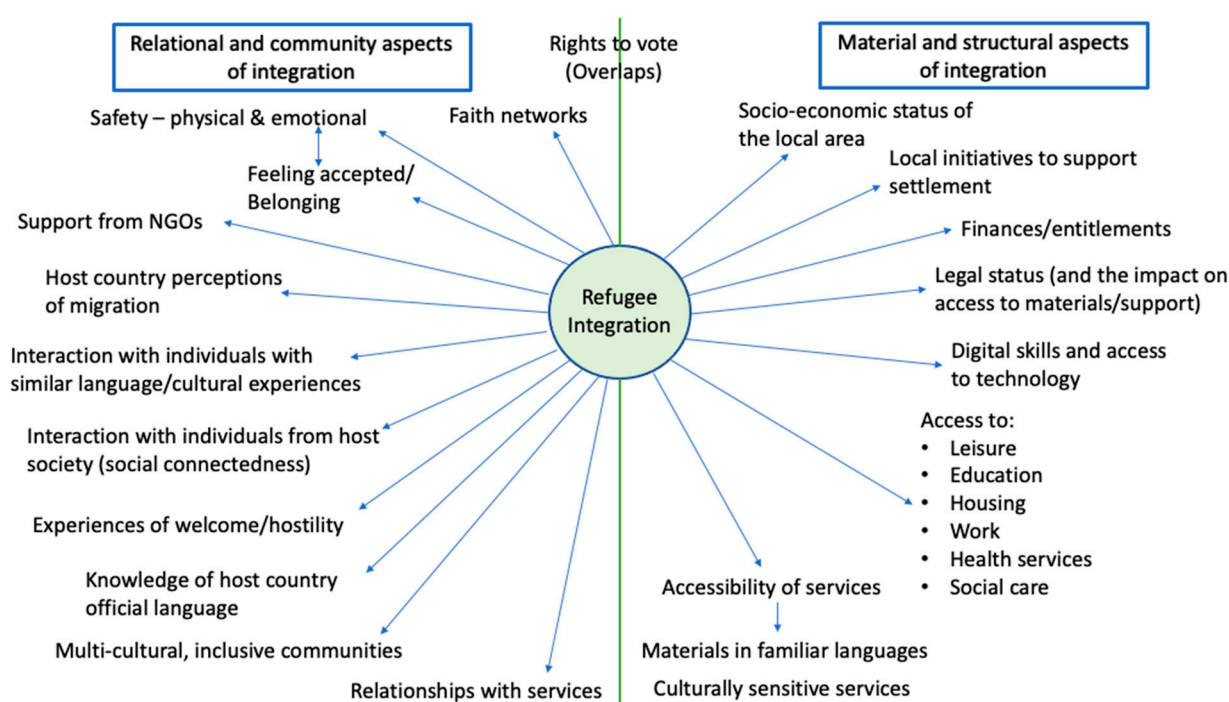

Figure 1. Two aspects of 'refugee integration'.

Yet, a map is never a territory. Integration is seen as troublesome by some. For example, Rytter (2019), in reference to Denmark, warns against the concept and its slippery nature, with too many people bending its shape to suit their intentions and desires. Over 30 years, asserts Rytter (2019), integration has been 'loose on the streets' in Denmark. In that sense, particularly written from the perspective of suspicion or adversarial view, integration is at once a promise and a threat. Overall, defining its many tendrils is presented as trying to catch a cloud with a stick, making it simultaneously (un)desirable and (un)attainable. Also, as Phillimore (2021) shows, the colours, flavours and textures of the term change across contexts and over time. What integration means can become clear, flimsy or opaque, depending on the ways the term is understood and enacted by those on its giving or receiving end. For Ager and Strang (2008), there are questions about how refugee integration is measured, and what thresholds of 'successful integration' might look like for refugees and the communities in which they live. Others point to integration as a mutual endeavour. Refugee integration thus becomes 'multi-dimensional', 'multi-directional', 'context-specific' and 'a shared responsibility' (Ndofor-Tah et al. 2019, pp. 20–21). It is this mutability and adaptability inherent within the term that amplifies the contextually embedded and relational nature of integration used within the Drawing Together project.

3. The Drawing Together Project, Relational Wellbeing and Refugee Integration

The Drawing Together project is a longitudinal collaboration between three countries—Finland, Norway and Scotland. Its focus is on how 53 young refugees establish new lives in those countries. Its participants are aged between 18 to 30 and consist of 26 men and 25 women from 13 countries who, at the beginning of the project, had been settled in their new country between 2 and 17 years.

Within the project, we consider refugee integration as a lived experience within the two aspects delineated in Figure 1 above. Moreover, integration is constantly seen within the project as both a process and an outcome. Contrary to some commentators, we do not regard the term 'integration' as dangerous, exploitative or subversive. Nor do we present it sentimentally, as if it was made of unalloyed goodness. We consider that it is neither dramatic nor sudden. We see it as quiet, unremarkable, and made over time by communities that live together within borders that seek to preserve and evolve national identities. Among the range of topics in the project that focus on the experiences of relational wellbeing in the past, present and future, we are guided by the following research questions related to integration in everyday life:

1. What does it mean to become or be Finnish, Norwegian, or Scottish for young refugees and the people whom they value in life?
2. What local or national resources, cultures, and behaviours make integration work, both for young people who are refugees, and hosts who are prepared to receive them?

Answering such questions means that we have developed an understanding of the contours of hospitality and reciprocity as they emerge over time in relation to the material and structural aspects of integration, as well as the relational and community aspects in each of the three countries. Within the terms of Figure 1, these may be familiar as well as new to those who shape refugee integration, including policy and law makers and practitioners. Moreover, the 'Relational Wellbeing' (RWB) approach, as postulated by White (2008), White and Jha (2020) and White and Jha (2023), allows us to examine the 'outer worlds' of our respondents and how these are informed by their 'inner worlds' of feelings and sense making related to integrating into the new country (see Schofield 1998). This approach indicates that integration policies in each country need to be built, not just around the two aspects in Figure 1, but around three interlinked dimensions, as defined by White and Jha (2020) and White and Jha (2023)—their paper in this special edition.

- First, people 'having enough' in terms of their material needs, and achieving stability through, for example, the provision of education and employment, housing, health and social care services.
- Second, people 'being connected' to others and exercising their relational rights and responsibilities within sustaining communities of protection and care.
- Third, 'feeling good' subjectively, not just in relation to others and to resources, but also in relation to their environments and faith systems.

Moreover, relational wellbeing assumes that, in order to create and sustain a balance between these dimensions of living, there are three drivers. One is societal, encompassing social, cultural and economic aspects of life. Another is environmental, lodged within an understanding of ecosystems, climate, and the 'sacred and moral order' of life. The third is personal, reflected in the ways people absorb their individual, family and community histories, and sharpen their talents, skills, temperaments and outlooks on life. Within the terms of the RWB approach, these drivers and dimensions together create the dynamic scaffolding for integration. This ebb and flow in people's lives shapes the ways wellbeing *(and therefore ill-being) are experienced and turned into stories by the project's respondents.

Methods and Data Analysis

At the time of our interviews, the majority of participants were students and/or working in low-paid jobs, as well as living in single households. All reported some form of

permanency in their legal settlement status, but only a minority had been granted formal citizenship. In Scotland, all interviews were conducted in English.

The project's main data were drawn from a series of individual interviews about RWB in three periods in their lives—childhood days, the present, imagined futures. In addition, paired interviews about the present and future were held with people whom our participants chose as 'value people'—that is, those who kept an eye on their well-being and supported them. These value people were generally chosen by participants from people they knew locally, although a minority were in other countries. Individual interviews within the three time periods focused on how different relationships impacted the participants' wellbeing, as well as how they saw themselves generating and maintaining wellbeing for the people around them. Paired interviews established accounts of the contexts in which the participants and their 'value person' had met, the ways their relationship had changed over time, and how this affected their wellbeing. All interviews were recorded and transcribed. All data were maintained securely, in line with the ethics protocols of each country and location. The transcript-based data were supplemented in two other ways. First, a diagramming approach was used to construct ecomaps (Ekoh and Sitter 2023); that is, relational diagrams that represent the perceived presence or absence of support in people's lives (Hartman 1995). In the Drawing Together project, these maps were drawn by each respondent in connection with four groups of others: 'family', 'friends/peers', 'formal/professional', and 'community'. Finally, interspersed with the interviews, art workshops were held in each country, focussing on the young people's communications beyond the spoken word in their new languages. Artwork also allowed the young participants to draw images related to a memento or object that was relationally important in their lives. Therefore, the participants created visual art, showcasing their talents through art exhibitions in each country. These art events included short films about the project, with testimonies drawn from the participants about, among other relational considerations, the meanings of integrating into a new country. Data were analysed using Nvivo, taking a deductive approach from the RWB framework, and identifying codes and sub-codes related to the three dimensions described above. Where drivers appeared in the data, these were cross-referenced within each dimension. Ethics approval for the Scotland component was obtained through a University based ethics panel focussed on applied social research.

4. Drawing Together in the Context of Scottish and UK Approaches to Integration

Now, we describe the ways in which the project findings in Scotland sit within a broader exposition of approaches to refugee integration taken in the UK as a whole, and in Scotland in particular. This sets the stage for our findings. We show the labile and complex ways in which refugee integration is considered and enacted, alongside the ebb and flow of political and legislative factors which allow refugees to be embedded as citizens within Scotland's borders. We suggest, overall, that despite obstacles and difficulties, Scotland exemplifies the ways a country can think about refugee integration as part of a broader promise of relational wellbeing for its citizens.

The political and policy contexts of forced migration are complex and ever-changing everywhere that refugees seek sanctuary (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh 2020). As with many high-income countries, the arrival and resettlement of asylum seekers and refugees within the UK has polarised political debate (Gibney 2004). This polarisation has sharpened since the UK left the European Union (UKICE 2021). Between the polarities of 'yes' and 'no' regarding the presence of forced migrants (and therefore the 'care' and 'control' of asylum seekers and refugees), there continues to be a wide spectrum of public and political opinion. This shapes debates on what matters and what should be done to shelter asylum seekers and to enable refugee integration. To some extent, the spread of opinions is based on the country's own capacity to say yes in ways that sustain its economic and cultural priorities. And the consistent worry, in contexts of economic and political turbulence over time, is about the death of nationhood as tied to customs, histories and traditions, as well as a

nation's vision of its own future as being safe and prosperous. The ebbs and flows of debates about forced migrants fit within wider European shifts in voting patterns, with many countries in 2022 moving to the right in terms of public opinion and their attendant political calibrations of saying 'no' where possible and 'yes' where necessary. In contrast within the context of Scotland, the slightly left-of-centre Scottish National Party (SNP) has chosen to say 'yes' where necessary to welcoming asylum seekers and refugees (Scottish National Party 2022). This is in contrast to England, where since 2017, the Conservative party has made a commitment to reducing net immigration. The National Census found that those who voted for the SNP are generally inclined to take a positive view of the economic consequences of migration; nearly three-fifths (59%) of those who voted for the SNP in 2017 present a score that implies they think that migration is good for Britain's economy, compared to two-fifths of Conservative voters (Curtice and Montagu 2018). Compared with the rest of Britain, there is less opposition to immigration in Scotland; in England and Wales, 75% support reduced immigration, compared to 58% in Scotland. Immigration ranks lower on the public's list of priorities (fourth in Scotland, compared to second in England and Wales).

There are political gains for the SNP-dominated Scottish Government portraying itself as more 'progressive' than the UK Government. Within the precept that managed immigration brings economic and cultural benefits to Scotland, the SNP deploys an image of Scotland being 'held back' by the Westminster establishment. In this context, the Scottish Government has emphasised that Scotland is open, kind and inclusive as a nation (Nicolson and Korkut 2022), building a further narrative in public policy terms of being more caring than the rest of the United Kingdom, particularly England (Davidson and Virdee 2018; McCrone 2017). Therefore, this context frames how Scotland demonstrates a welcoming and relational approach to integration in its articulations of material, structural, and community-based aspects of refugee wellbeing. Beyond the UK Home Office's Indicators of Integration Framework (Ndofor-Tah et al. 2019), the New Scots Refugee Integration Strategy 2018–2022 (Scottish Government 2018) is the key policy for refugee integration at a national level. Following an approach that "immigration only works when integration works" (Katwala et al. 2014, p. 20), a key principle of the strategy is that refugees and asylum seekers should be supported to integrate into communities from 'day one' of arrival, rather than once they have been granted permission to permanently remain. The strategy recognises integration as a 'long-term, two-way' process, and defines the benefits of cohesive, diverse communities. However, under constitutional arrangements in the UK, the Scottish Government cannot directly decide matters about asylum and immigration. These remain in the control of the UK Government under Schedule 5 of the Scotland Act 1998. The strategy therefore acknowledges the complex limitations of power that come as part of a devolved nation.

5. Relational Wellbeing and Scottish Civil Society

Relationality is also visible within Glasgow in particular, where there is evidence of a strong civil society infrastructure and local community action that support refugee integration. For example, the Scottish Government provides funding to the Scottish Refugee Council, an independent charity focussed on support, advice and advocacy for people in need of refugee protection. The Scottish Refugee Council is integrated within Scottish refugee policy, having worked alongside the Scottish Government, The Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA), as well as voluntary and community organisations to co-produce Scotland's national refugee integration strategy. This wide network of charitable organisations and community groups makes up a key aspect of the fabric of support for refugees in Scotland. Within the scaffolding provided by these networks, services and resources, the lives of refugees in Scotland are maintained and grown, in what could be described as a sense of 'conviviality' between hosts and newcomers (Valluvan 2016) within what Evans (2020) terms '*the still fraught and bumpy landscape of contemporary Scotland*' (Evans 2020, p. 256). This landscape is manifest in Glasgow's combination of affluence and deprivation (GCPH 2022), the main site of the Scottish arm of the Drawing Together project.

Yet, within this conflux, Glaswegians are attributed attitudes of hospitality, warmth and welcome for immigrants (Hickman et al. 2008).

An important symbolic example of this welcoming came on 13 May 2021, with the resistance to the Kenmure Street immigration raid. When Police Scotland, on behalf of a Home Office order, attempted to remove two Sikh men of Indian origin, the local community organisations quickly mobilised to provide a 'human wall' around the immigration van to prevent the police removing the two men (The Guardian 2021). This rapid mobilisation came through organisations that used WhatsApp to bring together as many members of the public as possible to prevent the two men being removed, ultimately being successful in blocking the police, a response that appeared to be about galvanising civic power.

The impact of these locally driven interventions is significant. While the Scottish Government provides an important policy context (and funding), local authorities working alongside other policy actors such as the Third Sector are often viewed as the critical players in supporting integration at a local level. This is due to their practical and direct experience of dealing with the material and structural dimensions and drivers of integration; these include, for example, decisions about the settlement of asylum seekers, the delivery of ESOL classes, managing community relations at the neighbourhood level and, more generally, the provision of statutory services (e.g., health, education) (Galandini et al. 2019).

6. Child-Focussed Policy and Relational Wellbeing

Outside of their control over asylum and immigration matters, the Scottish Government has responsibility over health, education, accommodation and welfare provisions. Therefore, the support and protection of asylum-seeking and refugee children and young people once they arrive in Scotland becomes the responsibility of the Scottish Government's childcare laws and policies. The Scottish Government has committed to incorporating the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC 1989) into Scots law. Already, the UNCRC is the basis of Scotland's national policy framework approach for supporting children: *Getting it Right for Every Child* (GIRFEC) (Scottish Government 2022). GIRFEC is framed by a vision of the child (and their family) at the centre of decision making, so that they can receive the right help, at the right time, from the right people. The aim of GIRFEC is for all children in Scotland, including young refugees (Scottish Government 2022), to grow up feeling safe, loved and respected. In February 2020, Scotland's Independent Root and Branch Review of Care concluded with the publication of *The Promise* (Independent Care Review 2020). This review calls for a fundamental shift in Scotland's approach to the experience of care for children—a shift which enables stable, loving, supportive and nurturing relationships to be strong foundations throughout all children's lives. *The Promise* also recognises Scotland's responsibility to care for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and the difficulties that many of them have shared during the Independent Care Review process (Independent Care Review 2020). *The Promise* calls for unaccompanied children and young people in Scotland to be placed in caring, supportive settings. It states that they must have access to education, health services and other appropriate services as required, and have their religious and cultural contexts treated with respect. In doing so, *The Promise* illuminates the policy landscape for young refugees in Scotland to be one of welcome and hospitality.

Perhaps what is less visible in these policy frameworks is the ways young refugees can feel integrated within the ecosystems of their environments. Similarly, there is little written in The New Scots Approach, GIRFEC or *The Promise* in relation to subjective feelings of integration via the religion and faith that guides people. Therefore, to capture these elements of heaven and earth, one has look at other Scottish social policies. In Scotland, these appear within the Scottish Government's Environment Strategy for Scotland (Scottish Government 2020), and its Equality Outcomes: Religion and Belief Evidence Review (Scottish Government 2013). Each delineates a sense that Scotland is a country with opportunities for integration; not just for refugees, but for all migrants. They also suggest that refugees may become citizens of a country that can promise them safety, belonging

and success. To work in harmonic ways, says Scotland, policies need to coalesce with each other so that integration feels coherent and meaningful over time.

7. Drawing Together, Integration and Relational Wellbieng

Now, we move on to what the young people say about day-to-day integration in Scotland within the framework provided by the RWB approach. Here, we give brief examples of 'having enough' and the material dimensions of integration, the experiences of young refugees being connected and being relational within Scotland, and feeling good in terms of the subjective experiences of living out their lives in their new environments.

7.1. HAVING ENOUGH, and the Material Dimensions of Integration

One of the participants' firm intentions in the Drawing Together project is to be financially successful, building skills that allow them to become materially secure. This fits with the emphasis in refugee integration policy frameworks in Scotland to establishing the material and environmental pathways to achieve such security and success as citizens. Therefore, many participants discussed having an initial focus on language acquisition and finding resources to support language development. Access to technology, particularly having a mobile phone to navigate, remained enduringly important. They used their mobile phones to navigate around their new environments,. Phones also allowed them to chart a way to the future through accessing relevant information. Importantly, their phones held images of the past, including family, music, food, and evoked nostalgia and memories that were not always comfortable. But they were pilots in finding ways forward. A sense of freedom lived in the simple choices that they made in the comfort of a little more safety in their lives. They were not complacent about the racism that they occasionally encountered, but regarded it as relatively uncommon. In instances in which they had encountered it, they were wary, learning to step back from danger rather than step forward.

In terms of gainful employment, the young refugees talked about their own persistence, and the kindness of strangers in helping them find employment. Here is one young person's experience:

> I went straight into the restaurant and asked them for a work. 'Do you guys have any work for me?' He said, 'Come back tomorrow'. And then when I come back the day after, the boss, the owner was there. And I said to him, 'I'm looking for work. The dishwasher was leaving. They said to me, 'We have you a dishwasher to start with, do you want it?' It was a hard job, I was doing it, I was doing it for two months . . . I was working very hard, they look at what I was doing, I was coming on time, everything. So, he give me the chance, I explained to him all my situation, my English is not good enough, my first time in this country, I don't have work experience. Even I say this, he give me the opportunity, he say, 'Not a problem, everyone has their situation'

Finding helpers was not just about their social networks. It also meant using welfare services to find housing, and education as a means of achieving success. Guides such as social workers and teachers became important people. But foster carers also did small things well. For example, in finding a dentist, one participant stated the following:

> And then she was trying always to make me happy. I remember my teeth was like a rabbit, like you know, was quite a bit out, and then when I laugh with her, I was hiding my teeth like this. Then she say to me, "Why you hiding your teeth because they are so beautiful, why are you hiding your teeth?" Because I said to her, I'm not comfortable when I laugh because my teeth is quite out, and when I laugh, I feel like I have rabbit teeth . . . And then she'd say to me, "Let's go to the dentist to do a brace.

7.2. BEING CONNECTED and Being Relational

Young people often talked of people who champion them and are 'family-like' companions. These relationships reached in toward the circle of other young refugees and were

often reciprocal, and they also reached out to the communities in which they live. As noted by a college teacher for one of the participants:

> *The word belonging, for me, is crucial . . . because I think what teachers on this programme always try to create, is this sense of connection, not just between the teacher and the young person[who is a refugee], but between the young people and each other . . . The connection that they can find with each other is something that can sustain them when they're not in the classroom, when they're not in college, when things have moved on in their life. To make those relationships with each other and to see how they can support each other . . . Because my sense is that very often young people feel that everything is being done to them and for them, whereas when they are able to support each other, they're doing it for each other. They're bringing something. They're offering something . . .*

Therefore, for many of the participants, these wider relations were often about giving or receiving assistance. Overall, the small and wider networks of support and obligation were there to steady them and carry them forward. As a project, we focussed on local networks first. As the project concludes, we will explore their relationships within wider networks—for example, in relation to social, political and cultural identities, or their relationships with the state, law, politics and welfare. We have glimpses of the larger picture. Within the smaller notes about connectedness, examples have emerged of football teams, language teachers, local guides explaining the rules of living, and people who understand the value of mutual respect and dignity. Looking trans-nationally, young refugees also showed their reliance on wider kin networks, far away but close to them. Equally, they talked about establishing a rhythm and pattern of life with others that is predictable and safe. For some young people, their connections were with faith communities. For them, finding a suitable mosque or a church appears to bridge the present and past, and also the future.

> *It means for me church, when I go church, so I can understand singing and if I want to be quiet, so I can be quiet, I can read bible, to teach people and to pray. Yeah, that's why its important for me to go church, to understand deep.*

As we drew young people's lives over time using ecomaps, we saw evidence of the ways their social networks contracted and expanded, and the dynamics they contained. Some relationships from the homeland withered, and others remained vibrant, at least in their mind's eye. Mothers, fathers, sisters and brothers all made cameo appearances within the remembered past as part of the memories of relational wellbeing. New relationships, with peers, teachers, social workers and foster families, showed the extent to which integration remained a spellbinding importance. The project's further analysis will focus on the pulse of social networks, not just across nations, but also how wellbeing is maintained or evolves within contexts of hospitality and reciprocity. Our evidence for now also shows the ways integration was impacted by the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic. Participants spoke about loneliness, and the chaos and mess created by withdrawing from public living, as well as the opportunities to maintain friendships.

> *If you ask a bird in a cage, "How do you feel?", what would the bird tell you? You've got freedom outside but you're in the cage, you cannot go outside [because of Covid], . . . I just look out of my window because there is a nice park out of my window, I can see the freedom outside, I can't use that freedom because of this COVID19 which is separating myself from my outside community*
>
> *But we stay on the positive side and encourage each other, being part of each other life, to feel that way, and to share that loneliness together, so not being able to face-to-face talk.*

7.3. FEELING GOOD and the Subjective Aspects of Integration

A key aspect of integration for some of the participants was endurance—the stubborn will to make it through to a new life. Feeling good also meant being receptive to not feeling good. Disintegration and integration lived together for them, the same as many migrants

seeking new roots. There were no short cuts, just the realisation that they had to be bigger than their barriers. Similarly, feeling good was connected to community. As one young person said about football: *It brightens every cell in my body*. Sometimes, when saturated with stress, having access to a gym was necessary, and contact sports like boxing came as a relief. In terms of outlooks and characteristics, young refugees' faith in themselves appeared important, just having access to nature and the open environment was also important. Happiness was a matter of practice before it became spontaneous. Being kind to people and animals, being curious about learning, becoming skilled at a job, and learning a new language all add to a sense of achievement and progress. Overall, arriving in a new country and being accepted by strangers was for some a high point of living peacefully:

> *[X country] people they are humble . . . In [this city] in the middle of the night I can walk by myself, no one can ask me, and [] people everywhere they say, "Hi mate," make you feel like safety ... In my country whenever you see someone you have to say salaam alaykum. Like here in [this country] you say hi, it's the same as salaam alaykum. People here are good . . .*

The two images below (Figure 2) were created by a young refugee in one of the art workshops in Scotland. The first is a gift he received from a teacher, so that he could begin to decorate his room. This was a valued object from his new life. He said the following:

Figure 2. Object and Artwork.

> *Yeah, I like this picture, it reminds me of when I first come to this country. When I came here it was so strange this country and I received from my teacher. So, she helped me a lot and the way I am here, and I am able here to learn from people and how I learn from society. I think that it represents her, how she likes helping people to encourage them to go to community, to people, get on well with them, to get to know them, to find yourself, be independent, to be freedom. Just makes you stronger. And every time I look at this picture, it makes me very stronger and makes me very happy.*

From this gift from the teacher, the above artwork was made. It shows the complexity of striving towards integration, in terms of hopefulness and joy, as well as sadness and barriers. The confusion of the past is drawn like wire wool in the bottom right of the picture. The doves are still flying. The young person has colour. In the top left, he sees himself as a tree providing shelter for others. He says the following:

> *So, like at the beginning I didn't know what I'm going to be, so I imagined myself and saw my future by these people, so I can help people in the future, I can give them something, hope . . .*

This hope was expressed in a final art workshop in March 2022 (Figure 3). We began by asking participants to gather around a large table covered with a large map of the world. After identifying their own countries, they found Ukraine. From Ukraine, they built corridors of safety to other countries using toy bricks as vehicles. They made bridges and

buildings. They worked silently in solidarity, evoked not only by their own memories, but in sympathy with the people of Ukraine. They said that they were just people helping other people. Together, they hoped for calm.

Figure 3. Art workshops and solidarity.

8. Conclusions

For now, based on these findings from the Drawing Together project in Scotland, we can say that, as a personal experience, integration for young refugees continues to be complex and fragile. Their stories appeared to be bigger than the 'how' and 'what' of the material aspects of integration. The analysis also identifies the 'who'—that is, the young person's own biographical likeness with the people around them in their new countries. The young people sometimes discussed the 'why' of being away from their lands of birth, within the stories they told about their life before leaving. They talked of the 'where' of integration, encompassing the ecology of living. They located themselves within the constructed and natural environments of their new countries, and how these limited or showed themselves as places of multiple belongings. In linking the stories of their childhood with their present circumstances and future dreams and hopes, they provided a sense of 'when', so that time did not appear to move in a straight line. Rather, it constantly unfolded around them. Thus, overall, integration as 'multiple belongings' is not only about their place in the world, but also about travelling in time. We can also tentatively show that the young refugees in the Drawing Together project in Scotland were intent on giving something back to the country that had accepted them. Within the terms of Scotland's refugee integration policy frameworks, integration was built step by step, layer by layer, into a scaffolding that young refugees used to grow their lives organically. As part of that re-growth, reciprocity was as important as hospitality. Here, accepting their rights and responsibilities as a new citizen was balanced with taking and offering opportunities for their own wellbeing and the wellbeing of others. The promise was that integration could be a win–win. We end with a quote from one of our participants walking in a park and reflecting on the laws of natural order that generate integration across ages:

> *Some of the trees are very old and broken*
>
> *they lean on other trees and they hold on*
>
> *for me it's absolutely amazing,*
>
> *it's not just human being that can help each other,*
>
> *look at nature, the trees are encouraging, holding each other's weight*
>
> *It's as if they were saying*
>
> *"Yes, don't worry, I'm holding you, we're not finished here"*

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