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The Newsflash is a weekly round up of publications, information, events, funding and jobs relating to asylum seekers, refugees and migrant workers for anyone who wants to keep up to date with the latest developments.

The newsflash is produced in partnership with the East of England Local Government Association - Strategic Migration Partnership and the Partnership Development Project (MENTER).

Asylum Seekers and Refugees

Suffolk Refugee Support Forum (SRSF), Ipswich – new website launch

SRSF have launched a new website which details the range of services they offer and when clients can access these services. Please follow this link to access the website: <http://www.srsf.org.uk/index.html>

Home Affairs Committee reports on work of UKBA

In a brief report, the Home Affairs Committee highlights a number of areas where the UK Border Agency is not meeting the standards which both those using its services and the general public have the right to expect. In particular, the committee singles out the continuing threat of delays and backlogs in processing asylum applications, which it attributes at least in part to inadequate decision-making in the first instance. Continuing the practice of its predecessor committee, the Home Affairs Committee regularly reviews the work of the UK Border Agency in a number of key areas: dealing with new claims of asylum, clearing the historic backlog of asylum cases, deporting Foreign National Prisoners, moves to end the detention of children for the purpose of removal from the UK, and the information on individual cases provided to Members of Parliament.

Please follow this link to read the report in full:

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmselect/cmhaff/587/58702.htm>

UKBA updated guidance issued on enforcement, detention and removals and citizenship for internal staff

UKBA published revised chapters of its enforcement instructions and guidance. The following 3 chapters have been revised:

Chapter 31 - Enforcement visits

Chapter 43 - Personal safety in enforcement work

Chapter 61 - Arrest teams - operational procedures

These instructions are part of UKBA's internal guidance for its which is published under its commitment to freedom of information.

Please follow this link to access the guidance:

<http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/newsarticles/2011/jan/14-revised-eig>

This link connects to the new guidance on citizenship:

<http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/documents/policyandlaw/modernised/cross-cut/>

This link connects to the guidance on port detention:

<http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/documents/policyandlaw/IDIs/idichapter31detention/>

This link connects to the guidance on enforcement:

<http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/documents/policyandlaw/enforcement/detentionandremovals/>

Negotiating Childhood: Age Assessment in the UK Asylum System – Refugee Studies Centre Working Paper

Following the decision in November 2009 by the UK Supreme Court to allow the appeals of two age-disputed unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, this paper seeks to address explore why age assessment has become politicised in the UK. It considers the disparate treatment accorded to children and adults within the asylum system; the complexity of age assessment for immigration purposes; the responsibility of Social Services, and finally how age assessment impacts the individual's asylum determination.

The full report is available via the following link: <http://www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/PDFs/RSCworkingpaper67.pdf>

Garden Court Chambers Immigration Law Bulletin

For summaries of recent asylum and immigration court cases, please see this bulletin by following the link below:

http://www.gardencourtchambers.co.uk/bulletins/category/bulletin_detail.cfm?iBulletinID=569

Protecting refugees – a booklet from Council of Europe and UNHCR

This booklet provides comprehensive definitions for different immigration statuses and stages of the asylum process. Each section then outlines the Council of Europe and UNHCR's policy in relation to each, including areas of cooperation.

Please follow this link to read the document in full: <http://book.coe.int/ftp/3582.pdf>

Separated, asylum-seeking children in European Union Member States – The Fundamental Rights Agency

This report examines the experiences and views of separated asylum seeking children, and the adults responsible for their care across twelve EU Member States. It is the result of research carried out by the FRA that investigated living conditions and experiences of asylum-seeking children, by engaging with them and the adults responsible for them. The report considers issues from accommodation, health care & social services care, to religious needs, education, and the asylum procedure. It finds that many of the rights of these children, which are often not clearly reflected in EU legal provisions, are not always fulfilled and sets out opinions as to how improvements could be made.

The full report is available via the following link: http://fra.europa.eu/fraWebsite/attachments/FRA-fullreport-sep-asylum-conference-2010_EN.pdf

Migration Policy Institute (MPI) data hub – an on-line tool to analyse asylum applications

This online tool provided by the Migration Information Source is able to extract data on the numbers and origins of asylum seekers in 39 countries across Europe and three other continents between 1980 and 2004.

Please follow this link to use the tool: <http://www.migrationinformation.org/datahub/asylum.cfm>

Greece to build a fence along its border with Turkey to keep migrants out

Greece has announced plans to erect a 12km (8 mile) fence along the north eastern part of its border with Turkey, in an attempt to prevent irregular migrants from reaching Greek territory. The Greek Public Order Minister considered that Greece had exceeded its limit in its capacity to accommodate migrants, having had 100000 people cross the border irregularly last year. The announcement has been criticised by European Council on Refugees and Exile (ECRE) and UNHCR as the measure is considered to also prevent refugees from entering EU territories, thereby denying them the legitimate right to seek asylum.

Please follow this link to see the story as reported by the BBC:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-12109595>

Migration

myUKinfo "My Status" helps organise information for users – re-launched website & information cards

myUKinfo has re-launched its home page to help users navigate the information on portal. myUKinfo now offers its users the option of searching for information based on whether they are:

- Thinking of coming to the UK
- Just arrived in the UK
- Living and Working in the UK
- Leaving the UK

These topics can be found on the main page in four boxes as well as within the " My Status" button in the top blue navigation bar. You can visit the new home page at www.myUKinfo.com.

A reminder that myUKinfo offers free information cards for migrant workers service providers which are language specific and available in English, Polish, Portuguese, Slovak, Romanian, Lithuanian and Russian. On one side is a flag which denotes the country and on the other side of the card is a translated description of the information on the portal. The information cards are the size of a business card and come in clear plastic boxes of about 100. Anyone interested in having some of the free information cards please email e:info@myUKinfo.com and provide details of the organisation, postal address, the languages needed and how many boxes of cards are needed.

UKBA consultation on student immigration – closes 31 January

Those wishing to comment on the approach to reducing student numbers proposed has until 31 January to submit a response. Government's policy is to ensure that only genuine students who are committed to their academic study come to the UK and that they leave promptly on completion of their studies. Follow this link for details of how to respond: <http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/documents/policyandlaw/consultations/students/>

The Big Society Challenge – a new book from Keystone Development Trust

Amid calls for a new localised state, a strengthened civil society, and communities made powerful, how do community practitioners foresee the implementation of the Big Society initiatives? Keystone Development Trust's new book, sponsored by Development Trusts Association (DTA), Lankelly Chase, bassac, and Social Enterprise East of England (SEEE) investigates the intellectual roots and political context for the Big Society agenda, and challenges the detail of plans to empower communities, and for public sector reform, suggesting ways to implement the vision of Big Society successfully. This collection of short and accessible papers, featuring case studies from DTA and bassac membership, addresses the difficulties of accountability, the dichotomy of civil society and the state, the relationship between individual and collective action, and points to the successful examples of the vision in action now. It also explores how the idea will affect areas such as housing, poverty, inequality, rural communities, the environment, and how it sits alongside social enterprise and the new austerity.

The Big Society Challenge is available in PDF for free at www.keystonetrust.org.uk or £10 for a hard copy - contact Neil Stott at Keystone on t: 01842 754639.

Sri Lankan born author, Roma Tearne, unveiled as first patron of Ipswich & Suffolk Council for Racial Equality (ISCRE)

At a reception held in Ipswich on 7 January, the author Roma Tearne celebrated her appointment as ISCRE's first patron. Her novels draw on her experience of fleeing Sri Lanka as the ten year daughter of a Tamil poet and Sinhalese journalist. During the 1980s, she made her home in Suffolk and her novel 'The Swimmer' is set in the county. For more information, please follow this link:

<http://www.iscre.org.uk/Home%20Page.asp?nid=154&pid=159>

Events

Training 'Money mentors', Cambridge, 19 January – for those working with BME groups

Together with the Citizens Advice Bureau and CHS Group, MENTER is organising a 'Money Mentor's training' on 19 January 2011 at The Meadows Community Centre, 1 St Catharine's Road, Cambridge CB4 3XJ from 12pm - 2.45pm. The 'Money Mentor's Training' includes topics like budgeting, increasing income, ways to save money, dealing with debts and sorting paperwork. It also gives helpful tips on how to give support, and importantly, when it is best to sign post. All participants will receive a free information pack on all the topics discussed, which they can use at a later stage to refresh their memory or to look up further information. This training is for members and representatives from Black and Minority Ethnic voluntary and community groups and Black and/or Minority Ethnic individuals. The training is free and reasonable expenses may be reimbursed, if arranged when booking. This training is funded by EEDA and the European Union European Social Fund.

To register for training, please follow this link: www.mentor.org.uk or contact MENTER on t: 01223 355034 or send an e-mail to e: office@mentor.org.uk.

Holocaust Memorial Day – A Vision of the Blind: A War Correspondent's story of the Congolese War 1996-2010. 27 January, Norwich

Norfolk and Norwich Millennium Library is hosting this talk in the training room on the second floor of the library at 6pm. The talk will be in French with a translator present. As the content of the talk may be distressing, it is not suitable for families or children under 18.

Funding

Office of Civil Society (OCS) funding to support European Year of volunteering 2011

The OCS is now seeking partner organisations to support the development and implementation of activities within England. Partners will be identified through a mixture of short, small contracts and grant funding.

The three contracts on offer are:

Employer Supported Volunteering Lead - During the year OCS wishes to promote and develop good practice in relation to the development of effective employer supported volunteering (ESV) programmes.

Volunteer Management Lead - OCS is also seeking to identify, share and develop good practice and resources relating to effective volunteer management.

Opening the Door to Volunteering Lead - Finally OCS wishes to use the year to promote and share good practice in opening the door to volunteering opportunities to those traditionally less likely to volunteer, including those from socially excluded groups.

Grant funding is available for 5 civil society organisations or consortia of organisations, to develop and deliver a programme of activities under five themes:

- Young people and children – March and April
- Environment – May and June
- Sport – July and August
- Culture and the arts – September and October
- Health and social care – November and December

Activity would support the development of volunteering within the theme across England and recipients will be required to work with a range of organisations working within the relevant field at national, regional and local level. Organisations which would like to bid for one of the contracts, find out more about the grants, or for any other queries can email eyv2011@cabinet-office.x.gsi.gov.uk

The Steel Charitable Trust – priority funds for Luton and Bedfordshire

The Steel Charitable Trust is a grant-making trust supporting general charitable purposes. Grants are mostly made to charities in the UK which are funding projects around either education, supporting the disadvantaged, health, arts and culture or the environment. 30% of the £1000000 paid annually goes to those working in Luton or Bedfordshire. Grants available tend to be between £1000 and £25000. There is no deadline for submitting applications, but the trustees meet to review applications only four times a year and are next due to meet in **February**. All applicants must complete an on-line application form. Please follow this link for more information: http://www.steelcharitabletrust.org.uk/grant_policy.htm

Jobs

MENTER Regional Infrastructure Project Manager (RIPM)

Norwich, salary £26,784 to £28,353, 30 hours pro rata. Initial contract to 31st July 2012

The RIPM will take responsibility for the development and delivery of a regional infrastructure project as delegated by the project steering group. The project is called Front Line Engagement through Regional Infrastructure (FERI) and is run for the East Region Infrastructure Network (ERIN), a consortium of twenty two regional third sector networks. The project will need to deliver infrastructure services to develop the sustainability of third sector organisations in the East of England. A guiding principle for the project is that the services should be delivered in a way that adds value and does not duplicate current national, sub regional and local provision. Good partnership development, particularly with sub regional and local providers, is essential, as is effective and appropriate engagement with the statutory sector.

MENTER are looking for someone with a sound understanding of infrastructure needed at regional level, excellent project management skills and good knowledge of public sector agencies and policies, particularly emerging initiatives such as the Big Society and localism. The appointed postholder will be someone with excellent communication skills, ability to influence strategic engagement, good partnership development skills and sound organisational abilities. The post also requires someone with the ability to supervise project staff/volunteers and the ability to submit good fundraising applications.

Closing date for applications is noon, **Monday 7 February 2011**. Interviews will be held on Friday 11th February

MENTER central office is based in Cambridge and so the appointed postholder will need to spend some time at the Cambridge office, albeit that the post is based in Norwich. MENTER encourages applications from Black and Minority Ethnic people. Due to the nature of the region, candidates will need to show how they can travel to areas where there is no good public transport. For more information and for an application pack, click on the link: <http://www.mentor.org.uk/content/mentor-wishes-recruit-following-officer-regional-infrastructure-project-manager-ripm> or contact MENTER, 62 – 64 Victoria Road, Cambridge CB4 3DU; t: 01223 355034 or f: 01223 349047 or e: office@mentor.org.uk

Refugee Children's project coordinator, Immigration Law Practitioners' Association (ILPA), Clerkenwell, Central London, salary up to £33,000, fixed term to December 2012

ILPA is seeking a Project Coordinator to run their project to support legal practitioners working with refugee children and young people. The project, funded by the Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund, and the Project Coordinator will coordinate and run a training programme for legal representatives working with refugee children, publications to support this work, and an annual conference to bring together experts in the field, ensuring that the project is informed by, and inform, the experiences of practitioners and ILPA's work. The post is line-managed by the General Secretary and involves working with all staff in the ILPA office, with ILPA's children's subcommittee and with an Advisory Group appointed for the project. The groundwork for the project has been done. In the period to June 2011 the post-holder will oversee the delivery of the planned training courses and the first year conference and publication and will then work to refine and develop the project over the subsequent year and a half.

ILPA are looking for a capable individual, committed to promoting the rights of refugee children, who combines an interest in law and policy in this area with an enthusiasm for project management and administration, to join a small team in a friendly and varied working environment, focused on enabling and supporting experts to share their skills. This is an opportunity to develop skills in a cross-over role: for those with substantive knowledge of this area of law and policy to develop their project management and delivery skills, or for a capable project manager and administrator with an interest in this area to develop their substantive knowledge.

Anyone interested in applying should follow this link for more information:

<http://www.ilpa.org.uk/11%2001%2007%20ILPA%20Refugee%20Childrens%20Project%20Coordinator.doc>

The closing date for applications is **4pm 24 January**. Interviews will be held on 31 January and 1 February.

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