

[Asylum Seekers and Refugees](#)[Migration](#)[Events](#)[Funding](#)[Jobs](#)

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

Question in House of Lords regarding number of asylum cases overturned on appeal

The question from Baroness Bakewell was to ask Her Majesty's Government, in the light of the number of asylum decisions overturned on appeal, in particular among female asylum seekers, what steps they are taking to ensure that women fleeing gender-based persecution receive fair asylum decisions? Please follow this link to read the answer from Earl Attlee: <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201011/ldhansrd/text/111011-0002.htm#11101177000642>

Refugee Council, Ipswich – new weekly drop in service

As the Refugee Council office in Ipswich is closed to drop-in advice, they are now making some services available via a weekly drop in service at CSV Media on Princess Street every Tuesday morning. Anyone needing help with post decision forms such as citizenship forms, travel documents, set M forms and passports is welcome to attend. Please call 079905 11104 for more information. Alternatively, for all other advice, please call the confidential and free Own Language Advice Service (OLTAS) on 08088082255.

European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE) weekly bulletin

The most recent edition features a report on the panel discussion hosted by MEP Claude Moraes and organised by the Red Cross EU Office, ECRE and UNHCR to look at the access of asylum seekers and migrants to international protection and humanitarian assistance in the EU, developments in the EU and the Council of Europe. It also previews conferences taking place across Europe. Please follow this link to read the latest bulletin in full: <http://www.ecre.org/media/news/weekly-bulletin.html>

New immigration tenders from Legal Services Commission (LSC) launches on 21 October for Suffolk and Norfolk

These tenders are part of the LSC's response to the closure of the Immigration Advisory Service. Their primary concern is to ensure continued access to services. Contracts awarded through this tender process will be 2010 Standard Civil Contracts in Immigration and Asylum. These will run from 1 February 2012. The deadline for submitting tenders will be 12 noon on **18 November 2011**. All tenders must be submitted through their eTendering system. More information, including the information for applicants document, will be available on the civil 2010 contracts – immigration tenders page when the tender opens. Please follow this link for more information:

http://www.legalservices.gov.uk/civil/cls_news_13137.asp?page=1&dm_i=4P,KKKO,24S5WT,1O6GQ,1

Refugee Council – new contact details for Children's Panel

The Refugee Council's Children's Panel is a team of people who can advise and help young asylum seekers who are in the UK without their parents or other close relatives. The panel has a new contact number and email address, noted below: freephone from most mobiles: 0808 808 0500 or e: children@refugeecouncil.org.uk

Children's Society freedom of information enquiry into detention of children at ports of entry

The press release issued by the Children's Society, issued followed their freedom of information enquiry to UK order Agency found that between May and the end of August 2011, 697 children were held at all Greater London and South East ports. Almost one third were unaccompanied children. Please follow this link to read the press release in full, and how this has been reported elsewhere in the media:

<http://www.childrensociety.org.uk/news-views/press-release/almost-700-children-detained-three-months>

BBC: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-15330419> The Guardian: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2011/oct/16/ukba-childrens-society-child-detention?newsfeed=true>

UK Government statement – UK not opting in to two European Commission’s Asylum Directives

The Immigration Minister made a Commons’ statement in which he said that the Government has decided not to opt into the European Commission’s amended proposals for asylum procedures and reception conditions directives. This decision stems from the Government concerns about the way in which the provisions in the reception conditions directive would allow asylum seekers to work after six months if a decision at first instance has not been reached and would place restrictions on member states’ ability to detain asylum seekers in exceptional circumstances. He indicated that the Government felt that these restrictions were unnecessary as in the UK system, detainees have the right to apply to the courts for release on bail, or to bring a legal challenge against their detention. To read the statement in full, please follow this link:

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm111013/wmstext/111013m0001.htm#1110133000007>

Migration

Opportunity for unemployed migrant workers in the east of England

CP Learning Trust, in partnership with TCHC, and with funding from the European Social Fund, is offering migrant workers working under 8 hours a week, or those who are unemployed, the following help:

- Information, advice and guidance
- Comparison of main foreign qualifications with state education system (NARIC) service
- Group sessions on CV writing, job search techniques and interview skills.

Anyone interested in receiving this support should contact Mick McMurray on m: 07921 975054 or e:

mmcmurray@cpltrust.net

Prime Minister’s speech on immigration

The Prime Minister made a speech in which he asked the public to report illegal immigrants and recommended that the citizenship test be changed to include questions on British history. Please follow this link to read a report on this story in the Guardian: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2011/oct/10/david-cameron-immigration-crackdown>

Limit on numbers of non-EU migrant workers to be further reduced due to low take up by employers – article in People Management

The cap on migration was introduced on a permanent basis in April and set at a limit of 20,700 non-EU skilled workers under Tier 2 of the points based system. This annual figure is divided into monthly quotas which fill as employers apply to bring workers into the UK. However, the number of visas taken up is falling short of the eligible monthly quota so the annual figure is to be reduced. Please follow this link to read the article in full:

http://www.peoplemanagement.co.uk/pm/articles/2011/10/migrant-cap-to-be-squeezed-further-after-low-uptake.htm?wa_src=email&wa_pub=cipd&wa_crt=news_1&wa_cmp=pmdaily_111011

Migrants in an irregular situation: access to healthcare in 10 European Union Member States – report from European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA)

This report from the FRA documents the legal, economic and practical obstacles that migrants in an irregular situation face in accessing healthcare in 10 EU Member States and proposes a number of ways to improve this access. The FRA found in particular that the risk of detection and deportation prevents migrants in an irregular situation from seeking healthcare, even in those countries where it is legally available, and suggests, among other improvements, disconnecting healthcare from immigration control policies. Please follow this link to read the report in full: http://fra.europa.eu/fraWebsite/research/publications/publications_per_year/2011/pub_irregular-migrants-healthcare_en.htm

‘Health tourists’ will pay the price for their NHS debts – UK Border Agency announcement

Overseas visitors who fail to pay off their debts for NHS treatment will soon be denied permission to enter or stay in the UK, Immigration Minister Damian Green has announced. Changes to the Immigration Rules were laid in Parliament this week, meaning that those subject to immigration control who fail to settle an outstanding bill of £1,000 or more will not be allowed to enter or remain in the UK until the debt is paid off. Please follow this link to read more: <http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/newsarticles/2011/october/19health-tourists-nhs>

Intelligence on Immigration – an article from IPPR

The article examines whether the Government's efforts to reach its net migration target will damage Britain's wider interests, suggesting that the reform of immigration entry routes have put restrictions on the kinds of migrants who are most economically valuable to the UK. Please follow this link to read the article in full:

<http://www.ippr.org/articles/56/8043/intelligence-on-immigration>

Publication of Human Trafficking Handbook

The Human Trafficking Handbook is a collection of essays written by professionals in the field of human trafficking and forced labour in the UK. Each essay brings a different perspective from within the UK on the topic, offering a picture of key issues such as victims' rights and the consequences of trafficking for the individual. Chapters include the identification of victims of trafficking, the care and support needs of victims, child trafficking, international duties on the State regarding trafficked victims, the right to compensation, the non-criminalisation of victims of trafficking and the criminal prosecution of traffickers. Please follow this link to buy the book, priced at £34.99: <http://www.lexisnexis.co.uk/store/uk/catalog/productdetail.jsp?prodId=ukprod9781405765596HTHP>

Events

Unitarian Peace Fellowship's Annual Gathering: Refugees in Norwich past and present – Norwich, 22 October

This year's annual gathering is hosted by the Octagon and will be an afternoon of talks and discussion on the theme 'Refugees in Norwich Past and Present'. Norwich has a reputation as a city which welcomes 'the Stranger' and these arrivals have added to the City's culture and prosperity. This tradition of welcome continues today and there are many groups and organisations within the City and the local area working to help refugees.

The three main speakers will each address a different aspect of the theme. Bruce Chilton is a retired solicitor who worked on asylum cases and he will give a historical perspective. Gervaise Koulougou, Refugee Project Co-ordinator with the British Red Cross in Norwich, will talk about his personal experience as a refugee and his current work with the Red Cross. Isabel Ingram from the Norwich Justice and Peace Group, who has worked with asylum seekers for many years, will give a talk entitled 'Hope in Hopeless Cases and Places'. The afternoon will end with a workshop introduced and led by the Norwich Quakers. In the afternoon break, when tea and cakes will be served in the adjacent Martineau Hall, participants will have the opportunity to view displays by organisations taking part in this event. The meeting takes place on 22 October 2011 from 2.00 – 5.00 pm, preceded by an optional guided tour of the Octagon Chapel at 1.00 pm. The event is free and there is no need to book. Further details can be obtained from t: 01603 505104 or e: carolchilton@hotmail.co.uk

Conference: Refugees, Migrants and the Equality Act 2010 – London, 10 November

Westminster Briefing is holding a conference on 'Refugees, Migrants and the Equality Act 2010: Understanding the Act and Meeting Responsibilities'. Speakers featured include representatives from the Equality and Human Rights Commission, Migrants' Rights Network, Refugee and Migrant Forum of East London and the Greater Manchester BME network. To find out more about the event, which will take place in central London from 10.30am - 3.15pm on 10 November, please follow this link: <http://www.westminster-briefing.com/home/equality-and-diversity/event-detail4/newsarticle/refugees-migrants-and-the-equality-act-2010-understanding-the-act-and-meeting-responsibilities>

Better practice in commissioning and using interpreting and translation services in health and social care – Learning event from Department of Health – London, 18 November

Interpreting and Translation Services (ITS) provide an invaluable support to practitioners and are a lifeline to communities where language is a barrier to access and equality in health and social care. This event will discuss several themes and questions that include:

How best to ensure quality assurance for ITS services in Health and Social Care? What is the need? What additional skills are needed for specialist clinical services? What will happen if nothing changes? How to improve commissioning of ITS services? Are they cost effective? How do they improve the patient experience? How can we achieve equality of care for communities in need in rural and urban England?

This free event runs from 10am - 4.30pm at NCVO, London N1 9RL. For booking enquiries and further information please contact Farah Islam-Barrett on e: farah@racefound.org.uk or t: 0207 619 6224/6220.

Platforma East for refugee arts – newsletter and forthcoming festival, 29 November

Shenaz from Platforma is currently working on putting together the first newsletter for the east and is inviting contributions to it. There will be a section to feature artist profiles, projects and news on refugees and arts work across the region and a section with calls for project partners or artists. Anyone interested should contact Shenaz and contributions to the newsletter should be sent by **14 October** via www.platforma.org.uk.

Bookings are also open for the Platforma festival taking place in London from 29 November to 4 December: the 'Platforma Festival Conference' (2-3 December); 'Acoustic and Spoken Word night' (2 December) and 'Live Music event' (3 December). For more information on the full programme see: <http://www.platforma.org.uk/pages/platforma-festival-2011>

Funding

The Strategic Legal Fund for Refugee Children and Young People (SLF) – new service launch

The Strategic Legal Fund for Refugee Children and Young People (SLF) is a new pilot project to support strategic legal work; work that goes beyond securing justice for an individual and makes a contribution to law, practice and procedures that upholds and promotes the rights of refugee and asylum seeking children and young people, up to age 21. The primary aim of SLF is to achieve the best possible outcomes for young people by funding interventions in Court and pre-litigation legal research for cases involving asylum seeking and refugee children and young people. The SLF is funded by The Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund and is being delivered in partnership with Trust for London. The day-to-day management and administration of the fund will be carried out by MigrationWork CIC.

The SLF will test a new model for supporting legal work in the UK by providing flexible and responsive funding. It will distribute up to £300,000 to eligible providers of specialist level legal services to undertake a non-profit making piece of work which does not qualify for public funding. Initially, cases in areas of law relevant to refugee children, including asylum, immigration, human rights, community care, housing, education, discrimination and health, may be supported. Please follow this link for more information: <http://www.migrationwork.org/strategic-legal-fund>. The deadline for the first round of funding is **14 November**, with further funding rounds each month through until July 2012. If you have any queries about the Strategic Legal Fund, please contact Frances Smith, SLF Project Manager, MigrationWork CIC on e: fran.smith@migrationwork.org or t: + (0)20 7091 0539.

Jobs

Ipswich and Felixstowe Street Outreach and Reconnection Development Worker – part time (3 days a week) and temporary (6 months) - £20,000 pro rata

There are two dimensions to this post:

- To research and identify the needs and provision in Ipswich and Felixstowe for those who are homeless or in danger of becoming so
 - Contact those sleeping rough
 - Develop protocols and codes of practice for multi-agency working
 - Ensure appropriate needs assessment procedures are in place and pathways to personal action plans and settled accommodation
- To liaise with partner agencies to establish robust procedures for reconnection and resettlement
 - Develop working practices for a locally agreed, client centred, assertive resettlement service for migrant worker and in-county individuals to reduce the number of people sleeping rough in the GHG housing sub-region
 - Establish formal and reciprocal mechanisms to local areas where people have formal and informal support networks
 - Establish protocols for payment of fares and other expenses
 - Maintain appropriate records and develop effective communication systems with partner agencies.

Fuller job description is available from the Community Resource Centre. Applications should be made in writing to the Chair of the Ipswich Umbrella Trust, Community Resource Centre, 1 Black Horse Lane, Ipswich IP1 2EF or: roger.fern@btopenworld.com. It should include a CV as well as a letter describing how the applicant believes they are suitable for the post. Closing date: **Friday 28 October 2011**, 12 noon.

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