

[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

Refugee Action inviting views on how to improve website

This year, Refugee Action is re-launching their website. They have sent out a consultation survey to all their staff and volunteers, asking for their ideas on how to make the website better for them and the clients they support. They are aiming to launch the new site in Refugee Week 2012. If you have an idea about anything you'd like to see on their new website, please tell them via [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#).

Children's Legal Centre merged with Coram – becoming Coram Children's Legal Centre and launches new service

The newly created Coram Children's Legal Centre is also revamping their website – and in the process has encountered technical problems. Any resources that you may need from them and cannot find during this period, please contact the project at e: mcp@essex.ac.uk or t: 0207 77130089. The new organisation has also launched a new telephone line offering free legal advice and information to frontline practitioners on child protection and safeguarding issues t: **07884 262362**, between 9.30 and 5.30 Monday to Friday.

The 4th edition of their 'Seeking Support; a guide to the rights and entitlements of separated children' publication is due out in December 2011. It provides guidance for professionals and carers on how to support young refugee and migrant children to access the support to which they are entitled. If you would like to pre-order a copy, please contact the project using the details above.

Watch over me – a system of guardianship for child victims of trafficking: a report from ECPAT UK

ECPAT UK (End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and the Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes) is a UK children's rights organisation. They are campaigning for a guardianship system because child victims of trafficking find themselves alone in the UK, without parents or legal guardians. The level and quality of support provided to them varies widely and is often inadequate. ECPAT UK believes that a system of guardianship would fill these gaps and provide child victims of trafficking with the care and support they need to negotiate the welfare, legal and immigration system, access all the services to which they are entitled and find long-term solutions to their situations.

The Government's present view is that the procedures already in place for children who are being looked after by children's services are sufficient to meet the specific needs of those that are the victims of trafficking. This report represents ECPAT UK's response to the Government's position. It has been drafted on the basis of communication with a range of parliamentarians, countries in which a system of guardianship has been introduced, two workshops with ECPAT UK's Youth Group¹, and a comprehensive legal analysis of the UK's national and international obligations to child victims of trafficking. It finds that the UK has failed to prioritise the best interests of child victims of trafficking, and has failed to identify and subsequently provide for the distinct needs of these children. Please follow this link to read the report in full:

http://www.ecpat.org.uk/sites/default/files/watch_over_me.pdf

Refugee Council Books – price reduction due to service closure

Due to a lack of space the Refugee Council will be closing their online book shop in early 2012. Until then, all their resources can be purchased at discounted prices. The minimum order for books is £15 but postage and packaging is included - this will be the last chance to buy. They have supporting resources for children learning English as a second language as well as general resources on citizenship, asylum and integration. They also have [Bi-lingual folk tales](#) from around the world. [Visit the Refugee Council E-shop now](#)

Migration

Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) report to government on family migration route to settlement

The MAC has published a report on the minimum income requirement for sponsorship under the family migration route. In July 2011 the government asked the MAC to consider the following question: 'What should the minimum income threshold be for sponsoring spouses/partners and dependants in order to ensure that the sponsor can support his/her spouse or civil or other partner and any dependants independently without them becoming a burden on the State.' The MAC report addresses this question.

Their analysis is that the present income stipulation is too low. The MAC suggests a minimum gross income figure to support a two-adult family of between £18,600 and £25,700. They estimate that nearly two thirds of sponsors would not have sufficient gross income to meet the higher of these thresholds, but suggest that, based on only economic criteria, there is a case for such a benchmark. Please follow this link to read the report in full: [report](#)

Follow this link to read how this was reported by UKBA:

<http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/newsarticles/2011/november/30-family-route>

Ipswich and Suffolk Council for Racial Equality (ISCRE) – Literary prize on migration, closing date for entries: 30 November

The 'One County, Many Voices' prize, run by ISCRE, is exploring themes associated with migration and different cultures and the competition involves two categories, one for writers aged between 11 and 18 and one for those older than 18. They are keen to encourage a wide range of literary formats so historical research, autobiography, prose fiction and poetry can be submitted, with the theme of migration and diversity.

Entries for the 11 to 18 category should be no more than 1,500 words and for the over-18 category, the limit is 3,000. Entries may also be submitted in entrants' first language. Both categories are open to all citizens falling into the above age categories regardless of race, nationality, religious belief or none, sexuality, language or disabilities. The winner of each category will be awarded £250 from the sponsor JIMAS, an Ipswich-based charity promoting understanding between different faith communities.

The deadline for submission is **30 November 2011** and entries should be sent to: Sue Raychaudri, Office Manager @ Ipswich & Suffolk Council for Racial Equality (ISCRE), 46A St Matthews Street, Ipswich, Suffolk IP1 3EP or e: sue@iscre.org.uk.

Foreign Doctors must prove they can speak good English – Department of Health announcement

Doctors who want to work in the UK have to be registered with the General Medical Council (GMC) before applying for medical posts. Currently only doctors from outside the European Economic Area (EEA) are routinely scrutinised for their language skills before being able to register with the GMC. European law prevents the GMC from vetting the language skills of doctors from within Europe. The Department of Health will give the GMC new powers to be able to take action against doctors if there are concerns about their ability to speak English. In addition, the Department will introduce powers so doctors can be vetted for their language skills at local level. NHS doctors are overseen by 'responsible officers', who ensure they are appropriately trained and qualified for the role. The regulations governing the roles of the responsible officers will be amended so that they have a mandatory duty to check the English language skills of all foreign doctors before they can work for the NHS in England. Please follow this link to read this announcement in full:

<http://nds.coi.gov.uk/clientmicrosite/Content/Detail.aspx?ClientId=46&NewsAreaId=2&ReleaseID=421457&SubjectId=36>

Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) – trafficking data

Compiling referral data from both the UK Human Trafficking Centre (UKHTC) and the NSPCC's Child Trafficking Advice and Information Line (CTAIL), the organisation says that out of the 202 nationally recorded cases that it looked at, the prevalence of cannabis cultivation, benefit fraud and domestic servitude remain amongst the primary reasons for trafficking – but all remain behind sexual exploitation which accounted for just over a quarter of the cases analysed. This latest update is intended to give front line practitioners a snapshot of the vulnerabilities that children are facing from child trafficking networks.

Most victims are aged 14-16, with more female victims than male, and fall into the following categories:

- Vietnamese children smuggled into the UK for exploitation in cannabis farms by organised criminal groups.

- Children from western Africa (predominantly Nigeria) trafficked to the UK, sometimes using forged documents or by making fraudulent visa applications, primarily for the purposes of domestic servitude and sexual exploitation.
- Children from eastern Europe trafficked into the UK by organised criminal groups primarily for the purposes of criminal exploitation, including pick pocketing and shoplifting.

Please follow this link to read the update in full:

http://www.ceop.police.uk/Documents/ceopdocs/child_trafficking_update_2011.pdf

In whose name? Migration and trafficking in the UK sex industry – a report from London Metropolitan University’s Institute for the study of European Transformations

The aim of the report is to improve understanding of the links between the sex industry and migration in the UK. Interviews with 100 migrant women, men and transgender people working in the main jobs available within the sex industry, and from the relevant areas of origin (South America, Eastern Europe, EU and South East Asia), suggest that while some migrants are subject to coercion and exploitation, a majority are not. The research reveals a variety of experiences and trajectories within the sex industry, influenced by a number of factors, such as social-economic background, family history, educational aspirations and achievements, etc. The research underlines that the emphasis on trafficking and exploitation obscures the variety of migrants’ trajectories into the UK sex industry and risks concealing individual and shared vulnerabilities and strengths, which could inform more effective social interventions. The main findings of the report are:

- Most of the migrant workers in the UK sex industry interviewed for the report were not forced or trafficked.
- Immigration status is the most important factor restricting their ability to exercise their rights.
- Working in the sex industry is a way for those interviewed to avoid unrewarding and sometimes exploitative conditions they meet in non-sexual jobs.
- By working in the sex industry, many interviewees can maintain dignified living standards in the UK and dramatically improve the living conditions of their families in the country of origin.
- The stigmatisation of sex work is the main problem interviewees experienced while working and this impacts negatively in their private and professional lives. The combined impact of stigmatisation of sex work and lack of legal immigration documentation makes interviewees more vulnerable to violence and abuse.
- The impossibility of guaranteeing indefinite leave to remain to victims of trafficking undermines police efforts against criminal organisations.
- Most interviewees felt that criminalising clients will not reduce demand or exploitation and that it will be pushed underground, making it more difficult for migrants working in the UK sex industry to assert their rights and all interviewees thought that legalising sex work and making it easier for all migrants to become and remain documented would improve their living and working conditions and enable them to exercise their rights more fully.

To read the report in full, please follow this link:

http://www.londonmet.ac.uk/fms/MRSite/Research/iset/Nick%20Mai/In%20Whose%20Name_Findings%20Report.pdf

Events

Bridge Plus+ Youth Party consultation event - 25 November, Norwich

The Bridge Plus+ is a community engagement project with links to Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) communities across Norfolk. This event will aim to engage Norfolk’s BAME young people by enabling them to talk about their experience as residents of Norfolk which will be recorded on a DVD. The video will be used to inform Norfolk County Council in understanding how young people in Norfolk perceive their identity in relation to their ethnicity and other related issues to be able to take their views into account when planning, commissioning or delivering services.

The event will be taking place at Open Venue NR2 4SF from 6-9pm and will include free food, a youth DJ, with an opportunity to capture and share the views of young people in Norfolk. There are prizes to be won for taking part in the DVD interviews (interviews are for ages 14-19 years only.) Parental consent is required for those under 18. Please email to request for consent form: office@bridgeplus.org.uk or call Rachel – 07825630941, Pensa – 07770366905, Angela – 07411390591, Adama – 07770804392 or Elvis – 07576684000.

Refugee-centred versus State-centred approaches to integration: processes, practices and narratives - a seminar from Refugee Law Initiative and Refugee Council - 30 November, London

This is the second in a series of six seminars with the over-arching theme of 'New Challenges in Refugee Integration' is being hosted by the Human Rights Consortium of the School of Advanced Study, University of London, from 5.30 in the Council Chamber. Please follow this link for more information about the series, including details of how to register and how to access the podcast of the first seminar:

http://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/eventsandtraining/20111011Seminar?dm_i=I6P,LWNQ,31R5LZ,1RW71,1

Mobility, education and migration conference – 8-10 September 2012, Cambridge

This international conference will encourage the sharing of interdisciplinary understandings of the opportunities, barriers and challenges in formal and informal education that are associated with the migration and movement of people, ideas and resources. It will enable a wide range of participants to present national, international and comparative perspectives on migration, mobility and education. The key conference themes are:

- Education within the areas of migration and mobility
- Migration and mobility in the context of educational concerns
- Culture, home and family

Abstracts and symposia are invited – the deadline for proposing symposia is **16 January 2012** and the deadline for abstract submissions, which should be no longer than 250 words, is **16 March 2012**.

For more information, please contact Professor Madeleine Arnot or Dr. Claudia Schneider e:

baice2012@educ.cam.ac.uk or t: +44 (0)1223 767600

University of Cambridge, Faculty of Education, 184 Hills Road, Cambridge, CB2 8PQ.

For more conference information, visit : www.educ.cam.ac.uk/events/baice2012

Funding

Hertfordshire County Council Locality funding

Each Hertfordshire County Councillor is allocated a budget of £10000 to be spent in the county on projects nominated by organisations and community groups which promote social, economic or environmental wellbeing. Groups interested in applying for funding should discuss their scheme with their county councillor first. Please follow this link for more information:

<http://www.hertsdirect.org/your-council/councillors/localitybudgetscheme/membrlocalbdgt>

Suffolk County Council Locality funding

Each Suffolk County Councillor is allocated a budget which is determined by the number of people they represent to be spent in the county on projects nominated by organisations and community groups. Councillors are able to make recommendations about funding from this budget for local projects in their area. Please follow this link for more information: <http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/CouncilAndDemocracy/CountyCouncillors/LocalityBudgets.htm>

European partner search under PROGRESS call for proposals on 'Social Experimentation'

The Directorate General of Immigration and Cooperation of the Government of the Balearic Islands (Spain) is looking for European partners interested in joining a project which aims to improve the integration of immigrant youth through the implementation of audiovisual and social skills workshops. They are looking for: Public entities, universities and NGOs working in this field. If you find this opportunity interesting, please get in touch with Ms. Ermitas Blecua e: eblecua@funbalext.caib.es or t: +32.(0)2.223.14.10 or by post to Centre Balears Europa Av Arts 3-4-5, 7ème étage, 1210-Brussels by **21 November**.

The Call can be found at: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=630&langId=en&callId=331&furtherCalls=yes>

The deadline for the Call is **15 December**.

Fundraising with home energy switching from National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO)

NCVO in partnership with LSI now provide a domestic energy switching service. It works like a traditional energy switching site, so can identify how individuals can save you money on their energy bills but can also raise funds for their organisation at the same time. Voluntary organisations that want to fundraise by promoting the service to their supporters and service users can sign up and receive up to £15 for each customer introduced who switches both gas and electricity. To set up a switching page for your charity and to start fundraising with it contact LSI on t: 08000 199595. To see how the service works follow this link to the NCVO [switching site](#)

Jobs

Volunteer opportunity – Severe Weather Provision (SWEP), Ipswich

This winter Ipswich Borough Council, in partnership with Genesis Housing Association, will offer 12 emergency beds, based at Cavendish lodge, a Genesis scheme in Ipswich. This accommodation will be available to rough sleepers during periods of extreme cold weather. Rough sleepers are likely to include vulnerable people, some of whom may have no recourse to public funds.

SWEP will be manned by two members of Genesis Housing Association staff, experienced in working with rough sleepers and people with complex needs. In addition, each night we will need two volunteers – one to work from 6pm to midnight and a second to work from midnight to 8am. Volunteers will never work alone. Volunteering will cover a variety of tasks such as assessing users, taking details, making guests comfortable, preparing drinks and clearing up in the morning. They are looking for volunteers to work once a fortnight, but it may be less often if the winter is mild. To register an interest in becoming a volunteer, contact the staff at Cavendish Lodge on t: 01473 219155 or e: d.wright@genesisha.org.uk

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