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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

East of England referral system for legal services for refugees & asylum-seekers from 25 July 2011

1. Essex, Suffolk and Norfolk

The Cambridge Immigration Legal Centre (CILC) and the Refugee Council (RC) will now be working together to provide a legal service for refugees and asylum-seekers from an the RC office, top floor, 4-8 Museum Street, Ipswich IP1 1HT. Potential clients should call **01473 297 906** or **07527 686 937** and ask for Lucy Alexander or Sally McEwen and request an appointment. A referral will take approximately 40 minutes.

Applicants must bring:

- evidence of means (essential): legally aided/free legal advice WILL NOT be given until at least one of the following documents is provided: recent benefits statements if the applicant is unemployed and on benefits, or, if the applicant is working, payslips (x 3 for monthly pay, x 4 for fortnightly pay, x 6 for weekly pay)
- documents that detail their case (very helpful but not obligatory): such as decision letters, Statements of Entry Forms (SEF), asylum interviews, contact details of previous solicitors.

New applications for legal advice involve filling out some forms and providing signatures and we can help the applicant with this and the information will be treated in confidence. After the appointment the applicant will quickly receive an email to indicate the referral has been successful. Applicants who do not have an email account will have one set up for them. Applicants must then check their email accounts for a further communication from CILC giving a more detailed summary of their case and its merits.

All fees are listed on the CILC website www.cilc.co.uk

2. Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire

Potential clients may call the Cambridge Immigration Legal Centre's head office on **01223 308 745** or enquire via their website www.cilc.co.uk or visit their office at 114-116 Newmarket Street, Cambridge, CB5 8HE. The same process as above will apply and applicants must bring the same documents.

3. Access via the RC free help and advice line.

New applicants may also request legal advice on the RC's OWN LANGUAGE TELEPHONE ADVICE SERVICE (OTLAS) on this number: **0 808 808 2255**

Immigration Advisory Service (IAS) helpline number for former clients

A helpline has been set up for people formerly represented by IAS, which went into administration earlier this month. If a client finds a new legal representative and wishes to retrieve the file from IAS, this is the number that they should call: **0844 974 4000**.

The use of country of origin information in deciding asylum applications: a thematic inspection by the independent chief inspector of UK Border Agency (UKBA)

To effectively consider asylum applications, UKBA Case Owners review information from an applicant's substantive interview and evidence submitted on their behalf in conjunction with available country of origin information, case law and the applicant's own statements to make a decision on whether an applicant qualifies for protection. In this thematic inspection, the chief inspector found that where there was limited or no country information, Case Owners adopted an inconsistent approach to identifying their own sources. There was evidence of some liaison with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office but limited work with government departments overall to identify up-to-date country information. There was a lack of efficiency and consistency where limited or no country information existed and no mechanism to pool knowledge obtained by individual Case Owners. Country information was poorly referenced in some of the cases sampled making it difficult for applicants and legal representatives to check the information and consider whether the decision was justified.

Please follow this link to read the report in full: <http://icinspector.independent.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/07/Use-of-country-of-origin-information-in-deciding-asylum-applications.pdf>

Follow this link to read UKBA's response to the report's recommendations:

<http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/documents/aboutus/workingwithus/chief-insp/a-thematic-review>

Refugee Week 2011 – evaluation

The feedback on Refugee Week 2011 has been positive, including the following highlights:

- Media coverage grew with over 600 pieces of coverage reaching around 24million people.
- An estimated 120 000 people attended events around the country.
- 65 posters exhibited at over 60 London tube stations between 13 and 27 June would have been seen by 64.9% of the London Underground audience, amounting to around 1,594,481 people.
- Over 7000 Simple Acts were registered the Simple Acts website during Refugee Week

National coordinators are working on a comprehensive evaluation and would like to hear from people who organised an event by completing a quick evaluation form [here](#). Those who attended events are also asked to send details and photographs to e: info@refugeeweek.org.uk

Migration

Home Office Consultation: Family Migration

This consultation concerns the government's proposals for the reform of family migration. It focuses on preventing and tackling abuse, promoting integration and reducing the burdens on the taxpayer. The family route being reviewed applies to non-European nationals coming to the UK on the basis of a relationship with a British citizen or person settled in the UK, and includes, for example, spouses, proposed partners, dependant children and elderly dependants. It also looks more widely at all forms of family migration, including family members of those working or studying in the UK under the points-based system, refugee family reunions and family visitors.

It sets the context of obligations under article 8 of the European Convention of Human Rights (ECHR) of the right to respect for private and family life, noting that policies and practices must comply with the ECHR. The proposals set out requirements that must be satisfied in family migration cases consistent with ECHR obligations but also outline circumstances where wider public interest outweighs an individual's Article 8 right.

The consultation is broken into 8 sections which cover proposed reforms to:

- Marriage and civil and other partnerships
- Tackling sham marriages
- Tackling forced marriages
- Other family member settlement
- Points-based system dependants
- Other groups – refugee family reunion and family visit visa
- ECHR individual rights and responsibilities

To read the consultation document in full, please follow this link

<http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/documents/policyandlaw/consultations/family-migration/>

To take part in this consultation, either complete the online response tool or write by printing and completing the response form by **6 October**. See also events below, where the Migration Advisory committee invites partners to address a question raised by this consultation concerning the minimum income threshold for sponsors of family members.

Home Office Consultation: Employment-related settlement, tier 5 and overseas domestic workers

After living in the UK for a certain length of time, certain categories of migrant may apply for permission to settle in the UK. To qualify for this settlement, a person needs to provide certain evidence, such as an understanding of English and life in the UK. Once someone has obtained settlement, s/he is entitled to live permanently in the UK, travel freely, access benefits and NHS services in the same way as a British citizen. However, settlement is not the same as citizenship as it does not entitle a person to a British passport or to vote in general elections. The consultation proposes changes to the settlement rights of those coming to the UK to work, changes to Tier 5 of the points based system and changes to the rules for overseas domestic workers. The key proposals are:

- Temporary and permanent migration routes must be clearly defined
- Only the brightest and best workers are allowed to stay permanently
- An English language requirement be introduced for dependants of tier 2 migrants applying for settlement
- Tier 5 temporary workers – 3 matters for consideration concerning minimum skill levels, restricting the period of leave to 12 months and removing the ability to sponsor dependants through this route

- Whether or not the overseas domestic workers route be retained, and if it is, strengthening pre-entry requirements, stopping the granting of settlement, restricting temporary leave and removing the ability to sponsor dependants.

To look at the consultation document in full, please follow this link:

<http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/documents/policyandlaw/consultations/employment-related-settlement/>

The closing date for consultation responses is **9 September**. Respondents can make written submissions to worksettlementconsultations@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk.

Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) – Call for evidence on the analysis of settlement of migrants using tiers 1 and 2 of the points based system

At the same time as the above Home Office consultation is taking place, the Government has commissioned the MAC to consider and provide advice on the following question:

- What would be the economic effects of restricting or removing settlement rights in Tiers 1 and 2 and/or restricting leave to a maximum of 5 years?
- If settlement were to be restricted:
 - Which economic criteria could be used to identify the most economically important Tier 2 migrants for settlement?
 - Would there be merit in making allowance for specific skills or occupations as part of the assessment criteria, based on factors including strategic economic importance, provision of key public services, and ensuring that the UK attracts the top global talent?

The MAC invites evidence from partners, which can be by answering the questions posed in the document in this link <http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/documents/aboutus/workingwithus/mac/call-for-evidence> or by contributing through a discussion event hosted by the Migration Advisory Committee in London – see details in events below.

Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) – English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) training, equality impact assessment published

Following the publication of an equality impact assessment of provision for ESOL, BIS has announced that it will work in partnership with the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) to develop new forms of support for those needing informal, community-based learning English learning. From August this year, national provision of full funding for ESOL courses will focus on those actively seeking work on Jobseekers Allowance and Employment Support Allowance (Work Related Activity Group). As part of a move towards rebalancing investment in skills between Government, employer and learner, other eligible learners or their employers are expected to make a contribution towards the costs of their ESOL course. Measures announced as a result of the report are as follows:

- BIS will work in partnership with DCLG to develop new forms of support for those who need, community-based, informal English learning
- Reiterating that fully funded ESOL training is available for jobseekers who need language skills to get into work.
- For further education colleges and training organisations, a clearer remit to provide good quality ESOL provision that employers are willing to pay for.

Please follow this link to access the report: <http://www.bis.gov.uk/assets/biscore/further-education-skills/docs/e/11-1045-english-for-speakers-of-other-languages-equality-impact.pdf>

Scientists, managers and tourists: the changing shape of European Mobility to the United States– a report from Migration Policy Institute

European dominant migration flows to the US waned after World War II, a result of economic, demographic, and policy trends on both sides of the Atlantic. Today, emigrants from European Union (EU) Member States make up about 10 percent of all permanent immigrants to the US, down from over half in the mid-20th century and 90% in the mid-19th century. However, Europe punches above its weight as a source of high-end workers as substantial numbers of European scientists, professionals, and businesspeople come to the US for its high-quality research centres and universities, or to join the US offices of global firms. EU citizens are particularly well represented among the ranks of “exceptionally talented” O-1 visa recipients.

Individuals emigrating from the EU to the US differ from other immigrant groups as they earn more; are more highly educated; are better represented in professional, managerial, and scientific posts and have greater English

proficiency. They also tend to be older than other immigrants and are more likely to be naturalized citizens. As the immigration debate in the US focuses on its large unauthorized population, the highly skilled migration flow from the EU is relatively low profile in policy circles. Perhaps the most significant policy affecting movement from the EU to the US is the Visa Waiver Program, a visa-free travel programme which primarily benefits Europeans and which has facilitated growth in the short-term mobility of tourists and business visitors. In light of the large flow of people travelling across the Atlantic, with many enjoying visa-free travel, border security measures have been the main focus of EU-US migration dialogues, while other potential areas of cooperation, such as labour migration and the circulation of professionals, have received little attention. Please follow this link to read the report in full: <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/pubs/EuropeanMigration.pdf>

Migrants in an irregular situation employed in domestic work: Fundamental rights challenges for the European Union and its Member States - report from EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA)

Based on research conducted with (predominantly female) migrants and civil society organisations in 10 EU Member States - Belgium, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Poland, Spain and Sweden - this report highlights some of the fundamental rights challenges affecting migrants in an irregularly employed in the domestic work sector. While many fundamental rights issues raised in this report are common to other persons employed in the domestic work sector, the risk of violations is exacerbated for workers who do not have the right to stay in the host country. This report deals with domestic work performed by third-country nationals who are staying in the EU in an irregular manner as they do not or no longer fulfil conditions of entry, stay or residence.

Please follow this link to read the report:

http://www.fra.europa.eu/fraWebsite/research/publications/publications_per_year/2011/pub_domestic-workers_en.htm

Events

Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) – consultation events, 11-12.30, London 12 or 19 August

The Government has launched two public consultations which the Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) will gather and collate evidence on. They are arranging two London events for those partners who would like to attend to discuss and provide evidence. The first issue to be consulted on concerns the settlement of migrants under Tiers 1 and 2 of the Points Based System together with Tier 5 and domestic workers. At the same time, the Government has commissioned the MAC to consider and provide advice on the economic impact of restricting or removing settlement rights under Tiers 1 and 2 of the points-based system. This is the question posed by the Government:

- What would be the economic effects of restricting or removing settlement rights in Tiers 1 and 2 and/or restricting leave to a maximum of 5 years?
- If settlement were to be restricted:
 - Which economic criteria could be used to identify the most economically important Tier 2 migrants for settlement?
 - Would there be merit in making allowance for specific skills or occupations as part of the assessment criteria, based on factors including strategic economic importance, provision of key public services, and ensuring that the UK attracts the top global talent?

Secondly, the Government has issued a consultation on the family migration route. At the same time the MAC has been asked to address 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?

If you would like to attend one of these evidence gathering events, taking place at the Home Office building, 2 Marsham Street, London SW1P 4DF please contact Ros Coles on e: MAC@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk, stating which event you would prefer to attend. Please provide the full name and company details of attendees.

Festival of Cultures – Norwich Mind, 50 Sale Road, Norwich NR7 9TP – 13 August 11.30am - 4pm

This year's Festival of Cultures presents a kaleidoscopic programme of multi-cultural music, dance, performance, workshops, cultural craft, free complementary therapies, food and many more family friendly activities. Inclusion invites everyone to bring food from their own culture to share. Anyone planning on coming to the festival please

let the organisers know by contacting the Inclusion Team on e: inclusion@norwichmind.org.uk or t: 01603 432 457 (option 6)

Funding

Community Grants for the third sector, from the European Social Fund (ESF) and Skills Funding Agency

The European Social Fund (ESF) was set up to improve employment opportunities in the European Union, so raising standards of living. It aims to help people fulfil their potential by giving them better skills and better job prospects. Community Grants make funds available in the form of small grants to appropriate third sector organisations to help increase employment and reduce inactivity amongst disadvantaged populations. It will be allocated to local groups that look to mobilise disadvantaged or excluded unemployed and economically inactive people. These grants will facilitate the progress of these individuals that are a long way from the job market move closer to employment. TCHC is the Grant Co-ordinating body contracted by the Skills Funding Agency to deliver this Community Grants initiative in the East of England.

Applications for funding are invited from voluntary / third sector organisations in the East of England which provide one or more of the following services / training:

- Initial help with basic skills
- Taster work experience including voluntary work
- Training advice and guidance
- Job search assistance
- Confidence building and personal development
- First contact engagement activities e.g. to Provide support to individuals overcome barriers to learning.

To the following client groups:

- People with disabilities and health conditions
- Lone parents
- People aged 50 or over
- People from ethnic minorities.

Grants of up to £12,000 are available to help deliver the above services to the client groups outlined. In addition there will be limited scope of up to 10% of the fund available to support capacity building activities within qualifying organisations.

Anyone interested in applying for a community grant should first email questions to the funders, via the links below. Answers will appear on [Community Grants FAQ page](#). To ensure the process is transparent and fair telephone queries will not be answered. Funding will be released periodically, awarded to organisations that have completed a formal grant application, which has a deadline to apply of **12 August 2011 17:00**. All applications must be submitted using the email submit button on the [Community Grants Application Form](#). Anyone applying for a grant should ensure that they have read the grant [Information Sheet](#) carefully before submitting the application.

For more information about the application process, and to apply: <http://www.tchc.net/services/community-grants>

Local organisations to recruit, host and support trainee community organisers

A qualifying host organisation must care deeply about their community, be locally rooted and inspired by the potential of community organising. Each host will recruit between two and five community organisers from their local community, to provide a base for them for the 12 months of their training in Foundations of Organising. Hosts will be contracted by 'Locality' to offer advice, support and guidance and the benefit of their local knowledge throughout the training year. Hosts and trainee organisers will be supported by 'Locality' to develop ways to sustain the work beyond the training year. A contracted host organisation is paid a fee of £3000 for their work.

Hosts must be locally controlled and independent but can be a community, voluntary, educational or private sector organisation. They welcome applications from potential hosts with specialist reach – as long as they can support the broad-based geographical approach which is central to the programme – as they are keen to recruit community organisers from all backgrounds, including those who might otherwise count themselves out.

Hosts should have:

- Experience of people management
- Someone able to offer the community organisers advice and support

- Office space for the community organisers including use of IT facilities
 - Knowledge of and connections to the local area
 - HR procedures, governing documents and a bank account
- For more information, including details of how to apply, please follow this link:
<http://locality.org.uk/projects/community-organisers/host-organisation>

Jobs

There are no job updates in this edition

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