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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

UK Border Agency (UKBA) returns appeal rights exhausted Tamils to Sri Lanka – Independent

The Independent reported on the return of 26 mainly ethnic Tamils to Sri Lanka. The group were end of process asylum seekers whose claims for asylum had not been successful. Please follow this link to read the report in full: <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/asia/fears-for-tamils-sent-back-to-sri-lanka-from-uk-2299312.html>

Refugee Council Multi-lingual telephone advice service now operational across the UK

Since the launch of the Own Language Telephone Advice Service (OLTAS) in Birmingham, followed by the east of England, the service has gone live across the UK from 20 June, meaning that all Refugee Council offices are closed to drop-in advice. Callers can talk directly to an adviser in the following languages: Farsi, Pashtu, Arabic, Kurdish Sorani, Tigrinya and Mandarin. Anyone who does not speak the above languages will have the option to speak to an adviser in English who will make a return call to the client using an interpreter or bilingual adviser. The OLTAS telephone number is **0808 808 2255**.

For people with a hearing impairment, a minicom / textphone service is available **0808 808 2259**.

Calls from landline numbers and the main six UK mobile phone networks 3, Orange, Virgin, Vodafone, T-Mobile and O2 are free. Callers do not need to have any credit on their phone to make an OLTAS call. The OLTAS service is open 9.30am – 1pm and 2pm - 5pm Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday and 2pm - 5pm Wednesday.

G4S complaints revealed about Immigration Detention Centres – BBC

The BBC made a freedom of information enquiry of G4S and learnt that 773 complaints were made by immigration detainees about the immigration detention centres run by G4S. While this number of complaints represented an increase on the previous year of 240, only 130 were found to be fully or partially substantiated. More than half the complaints related to Brook House, near Gatwick airport, which houses foreign national prisoners waiting to be deported. G4S commented on the figures and highlighted the downward trend of substantiated complaints made against staff. UKBA commented that the simplification of the complaints procedure has contributed to the overall rise in complaint numbers. Please follow this link to read the report from the BBC: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-13802163>

Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) call on EU leaders to provide robust response to North African refugee crisis – European Council on Refugees and Exile (ECRE)

As the humanitarian crisis in Libya worsens and its impact on neighbouring countries increases, the EU's response to the developments in the region and in particular the needs of refugees fleeing the region so far are proving inadequate. Ahead of the European Council on 23 and 24 June, eight non-governmental organisations, including ECRE and Save the Children, urge the Heads of State and Government to give a strong signal of compassion with people in need of international protection and solidarity with the countries in the region. These countries are going through an epochal change and there is a need for the EU to show true political leadership by providing a solid and generous response.

To read the letter in full, please follow this link: http://www.ecre.org/resources/ECRE_actions/1783

University of East Anglia PhD student – contact with refugee and asylum seeking mothers for research

Alice Haynes is working on a research project about the mothering experiences of asylum-seeking and refugee women in England and is looking for mothers who would be willing to share their experiences with her. If there are organisations that can access such women who would be prepared to share their experiences, which will be anonymised and shared only within academic and refugee support agencies, please contact Alice e: alice.haynes@uea.ac.uk m: 07585 118 613

26th anniversary of Schengen celebrated amid panic over refugees – ECRE

The passport-free area Schengen celebrated its 26th anniversary last week, at a time when some Member States appear to be undermining this EU achievement. This stems from a fear of refugees arriving from Libya, trying to find refuge across the Mediterranean. The European Commissioner for Home Affairs emphasised that for Schengen to work, Member States must trust each other. This comes at a time when the Danish government has strengthened its border by establishing permanent and visible customs controls at all Danish borders - a move criticised by the European Commission. In April, French and Italian leaders asked to examine the option of introducing temporary border controls inside the Schengen area "in case of exceptional difficulties in the management of the common external borders". According to UNHCR, as of 10 June the number of arrivals to Italy amounts to 40,745 people and the number of arrivals from Libya to Malta amounts to 1,555 people. In contrast, 513,092 people fled Libya to Tunisia, 334,613 to Egypt, 72,291 to Niger, 30,369 to Chad and 19,632 to Algeria. All these countries that are willing to assist refugees lack sufficient resources, and the political stability to host significant numbers of people. To read this and the other articles in ECRE's latest bulletin, please follow this link: http://www.ecre.org/files/ECRE_Weekly_Bulletin_17_June_2011.pdf

Migration

Migration and health - a series of commissioned articles from Public Library of Science (PLoS)

In the first article in the series, writers from the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine (LSHTM), lay out a new framework that describes migration as a multi-staged process involving numerous health risks and intervention opportunities. This migration-health framework benefits international and local policy-makers by highlighting various points for intervention and options for coordination between nations. Five subsequent articles in the series discuss in-depth the health impacts and policy needs associated with the five phases of this migratory process: pre-departure, travel, destination, interception, and return. In an editorial published at the end of the series, the *PLoS Medicine* Editors highlight one troubling aspect of migration—sex trafficking—and what needs to be done to address it. Please follow this link to read the articles in full:

<http://www.ploscollections.org/article/browse/issue.action?issue=info%3A%2F10.1371%2Fissue.pcol.v07.i14>

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

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:

I. Which economic criteria could be used to identify the most economically important Tier 2 migrants for settlement?

II. 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 has been asked to report to the Government by September 2011. The MAC invites evidence from all partners to inform its consideration of this question. Further details about this work, the MAC's own call for evidence questions, and how to submit evidence can be found in the document by following this link:

<http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/documents/aboutus/workingwithus/mac/call-for-evidence> .

Please note that the deadline for submitting evidence to the MAC is **31 August**. Evidence can be sent by post to: Migration Advisory Committee, 1st Floor, Green Park House, 29 Wellesley Road, Croydon CR0 2AJ

Or email to: mac@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk. For further advice please call 020 8760 2812.

Extension of stay for skilled workers formerly in closed work routes – UKBA

UKBA is setting up new arrangements for skilled workers who came to the UK under work routes that have now closed, so that they can extend their stay in the UK to a total of 5 years. When Tier 2 of the points-based system was introduced in 2008, transitional arrangements were made so that migrants in closed work categories could apply to extend their stay under Tier 2. The intention was that their permission to stay (known as 'leave to remain') under Tier 2 would take their total stay in a work category to 5 years, but some migrants may have been granted an incorrect extension owing to technical restrictions. UKBA will introduce arrangements for these migrants to get additional leave to remain, taking their total stay to 5 years and will be granted free of charge.

To qualify for the additional leave, applicants must have previously been given permission to stay for less than 2

years through one of five employment routes, and meet additional requirements. Full details are shown on the website by following the link below. Anyone granted additional leave is not guaranteed to qualify for permission to settle in the UK (known as 'indefinite leave to remain') having lived in the UK for 5 years - applicants will need to meet the settlement criteria in force at the time of applying for settlement. Applicants wishing to apply for this additional leave under these arrangements will need to use new application form T2 (W), which will be published on the UKBA website in early **August 2011**. Please follow this link to find out more:

<http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/newsarticles/2011/june/36-extension-skilled-workers>

European Qualifications Framework Website – European Commission

The European Qualifications Framework (EQF) is a mechanism which allows for the comparison of national qualifications systems to the eight-level European framework. The Commission has recently launched an EQF website which gives access to information on how Member States have referenced their national systems to date. For more information see: http://ec.europa.eu/eqf/home_en.htm

Centre for Social Justice (CSJ) - Slavery and Human Trafficking review launch

The CSJ Slavery and Human Trafficking policy review will be led by Andrew Wallis, director of anti-trafficking and victim support charity Unseen UK, and will report in 15 months. UK slavery takes three main forms: domestic servitude, forced labour such as the tragic case of the 21 cockle pickers drowned in Morecombe Bay in 2004 who were the victims of a criminal gang trafficking vulnerable migrants; and sexual exploitation through prostitution. It will cover the causes of slavery, support and aftercare and identification, training and enforcement. In the year to March 2010, 706 victims of slavery were formally identified in this country but the true numbers are much higher. According to one estimate, some 6,000 women and children have been trafficked into the UK and forced into prostitution. Please follow this link to read about the launch and policy review:

<http://www.centreforsocialjustice.org.uk/default.asp?pageRef=37>

Events

The unseen slave next door – addressing the trafficking of children for domestic slavery – London, 1 July

This conference, organised by Africans unite against child abuse (Afruca), is aimed at social workers, the police, child rights practitioners, faith groups and lawyers. Experts in the field believe agencies do not see domestic servitude as being on a par with trafficking for sexual exploitation, so has seen low levels of intervention in detecting and protecting victims. This gap in intervention and prosecution of traffickers means the practice continues, leading to enduring consequences of this abuse on victims and survivors. According to the Anti-Trafficking Monitoring Group, the National Referral Mechanism (NRM), put in place by the Government to help victims of trafficking for exploitation, is “not fit for purpose”. NRM data shows that out of 187 referrals of children from countries outside the UK only 32 (17%) were granted a positive final decision, that they are victims of trafficking. This conference will bring together practitioners with responsibility for counter trafficking work and will explore factors that fuel the growth in child trafficking for domestic servitude as well as gaps in the system that makes safeguarding victims difficult. It will examine recent court cases to identify lessons to be learnt by agencies in putting together strategies and protocols to address the problem.

The conference is priced at £40 per delegate. To find out more and to register, please follow this link:

<http://www.afrucu.org/component/content/article/10/69-10th-anniversary-seminar-1st-july-2011.html>

Key issues in Asylum – 6 July. Introduction to asylum support – 7 July. Training from Refugee Council, Brixton

Refugee Council courses are for practitioners working with refugee and asylum seeking children and for people who are new to the sector and looking to get the basic knowledge of key issues in asylum and asylum support. Their courses are delivered by experienced practitioners, ensuring they are relevant, up-to-date and practical.

Please follow these links for more information and to book a place:

http://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/eventsandtraining/training/service/fulldetails.htm?dm_i=I6P,G6F6,31R5LZ,1BBZA,1#keyissues

http://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/eventsandtraining/training/service/fulldetails.htm?dm_i=I6P,G6F6,31R5LZ,1BBZA,1#asylumsupport

World food festival – Oaklands College, Welwyn Garden City, 9 July

Oaklands College in association with Welwyn District Council is looking to recruit food stalls and entertainment acts for their first World Food Festival in Welwyn Garden City town centre on July 9. They are looking for people who can add value to the day and help create the cultural vibe they are trying to achieve. Anyone interested in taking part is asked to make contact with either Sean Sculley t: 01727 737000 (ext 7306) e:

sean.sculley@oaklands.ac.uk or Khaled t: 01727 737303 e: foodfestival@oaklands.ac.uk

Health issues of eastern European Roma Migrants – EELGA, Flempton, Suffolk, 20 July

A few places remain on this second training event being run by the London-based organisation Roma Support. The first, a **general introduction to working with Roma migrants on 30 June**, has now sold out, so anyone interested should follow this link and register to go on the waiting list as we may be able to run it again in the future, or offer a place if there are cancellations. <http://www.eelga.gov.uk/events/view-event.aspx?ID=2720>

The health focused half day session is aimed at practitioners currently working with the Roma community who would like to learn more and improve their practice. It will also look at mental health issues, access to health and social care and health issues commonly found amongst Roma families. Please follow this link to find out more and to register, at a cost of £45 per delegate for those in the voluntary sector, £65 per delegate from the statutory or private sector: <http://www.eelga.gov.uk/events/view-event.aspx?ID=2721>

Mature students 'University experience' days, University of East Anglia, Norwich, 16 and 17 September

This year the Outreach office is running a two day event aimed at mature people who may be thinking of returning to Higher Education in the next two to three years. Students do not have to be currently studying to be able to attend. The event will provide generic information on the faculties and attendees will be able to participate in academic taster sessions in a select number of courses. The event will also cover information on Finance, Social and Pastoral care that is available at the University. The event is open to anyone over the age of 21 years old and is totally **free** to attend, including lunch. For more information and to obtain an application form to register, please contact Trevor Smith e: t.d.smith@uea.ac.uk t: 01603 591521

Funding

Peer-to-peer learning for Refugee Community Organisations in the east of England, from Basis project

The Basis project is inviting Refugee Community Organisations (RCO) to come forward if they would like to find a mentor organisation to learn from. The successful RCO will have their expenses paid to attend 4 meetings with their mentor where they share experiences and good practice. Interested RCOs may have a mentor organisation in mind, or if not, Basis can match them up with one, based on the RCO's needs and objectives. The mentor organisation will be paid £100 for the meetings they have with their mentee. As well as sharing and learning, this relationship may lead to future partnership working opportunities. The selection of the winning 'mentee organisation' will be based on the level of need and depth of disadvantage that a particular RCO is facing, when it comes to available resources and number of opportunities to learn from other organisations in the region.

To find out more or to request an application, please contact Shpetim Alimeta on m: 07908 952 405 or e: shpetim.alimeta@refugeecouncil.org.uk or odo.east@gmail.com

Cambridgeshire Community Foundation core grant programme

The Foundation administers a variety of funds to support not-for-profit voluntary and community groups in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. Grants are usually awarded up to £3000 per annum. Applications are open to community and voluntary organisations that are charitable, educational, philanthropic or benevolent in purpose in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough but do not have to be a registered charity. Support is available under 5 programmes, but newsflash readers may be interested in the strand which funds activities that focus on community development and engagement. Funders are looking for projects which target disadvantaged people or those in disadvantaged communities that promote community cohesion, integration of ethnic and other minorities and collaboration between groups. The aim is to strengthen communities and build the capacity of local groups to provide services and support addressing the needs of local people. The next deadline for applications is **31 July 2011**. Please follow this link for more information about how to apply: <http://www.cambscf.org.uk/core-grant-programmes.html>

Jobs

Internships at Cambridgeshire Community Foundation

The Foundation develops philanthropy, helps local companies with their Corporate Social Responsibility and makes grants to local groups to support local needs. They are recruiting volunteer interns to help in some of their work. The scheme is aimed at graduates, undergraduates and people looking to change career path. The internships generally last for 12 weeks and are voluntary placements, but they will reimburse travel and lunch expenses. Anyone interested in this opportunity should complete an application form and provide details of two referees. Please follow this link for more information: <http://www.cambscf.org.uk/vacancies-634.html>

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