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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

Cambridge Immigration Law Centre (CILC) – closed to new legal aid asylum cases until January 2012

Since the closure of Immigration Advisory Service (IAS), which had branches in Norwich and Peterborough, the only provider of legal aid immigration advice across the three asylum dispersal sites in the east of England - Norwich, Ipswich and Peterborough - is Cambridge Immigration Law Centre. As of 26 October they are reporting that the casework being handled from their main office in Cambridge is now in backlog and they expect to clear this by January 2012. In the meantime they have taken the decision to not take on new Legal Aid cases until then, unless the matter is highly urgent – if the client is being detained or deported. From their satellite operation run in partnership with the Refugee Council in Ipswich, they expect to be able to resume non-urgent cases from mid-November. Existing cases in their backlog can expect to wait one month before a caseworker reviews it. The Strategic Migration Partnership will take up this issue with the Legal Services Commission, as the process for allowing new legal aid providers into the market in Norfolk and Suffolk will not be concluded until 1 February 2012.

No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) network - October bulletin issued

The bulletin contains the following articles:

- Zambrano Ruling - UKBA Guidance for Carers of British Children
- R (VC and others) v Newcastle City Council [2011] EWHC 2673 – competing powers to provide accommodation and subsistence to a refused asylum seeker.
- UKBA Family Migration Consultation – a summary of the NRPF's views and access to its full response.
- British Bill of Rights Consultation – creating a UK Bill of Rights to incorporate European Convention of Human Rights into UK law.
- NRPF Connect – Update on progress of the database for local authorities to record their NRPF cases.
- NEW! Scotland NRPF Network
- Upcoming NRPF Training Dates
- Regional NRPF Network Meeting Dates

To read this bulletin in full, please follow the link below. More information on the NRPF Network can be found at:

www.islington.gov.uk/nrpfnetwork

<http://www.eelga.gov.uk/documents/Policy%20and%20Priorities/Strategic%20Migration%20Partnership/Asylum%20and%20Refugee%20Integration/NRPF%20Network%20-%20October%202011%20Bulletin.pdf>

Women's Asylum News – October edition now available

The lead article in this month's issue looks at the development of case law in the last twelve years and the attempts by the UK to identify what is at the core of asylum claims made by lesbians. The article highlights the need to understand that it is the failure to abide by the "heterosexual narrative" which places asylum seekers at risk in their country of origin.

This issue also contains case summaries of recent judgments in the UK Supreme Court, the Upper Tribunal and a US Immigration Court. There is also a link to a new fact sheet from Asylum Support Appeals Project about maternity benefits available to those on Section 95 or Section 4 support. Please follow this link to read the bulletin in full: http://www.asylumaid.org.uk/data/files/publications/172/WAN_October.pdf

Promoting African Refugee Community Association (PARCA) – launch of new website

PARCA have worked in Peterborough since 2002 and they focus on helping new arrivals to integrate into British society. They have recently re-launched their website to coincide with their name change (from 'Peterborough' to 'promoting' to reflect the services they provide beyond the city boundaries). Please follow this link to access the website: <http://www.promoting-refugee.org>

Migration

Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) call for evidence – points based system, tier two limit and associated policies

The MAC would like views on the following questions, posed by the government:

- As the Government anticipates net migration to be in the tens of thousands in future, at what level should the limit on Tier 2 (General) be set for 2012, taking account of the economic, labour market, social and public service impacts of the limit; and of the uptake of Tier 2 (General) and intra-company transferee visas in 2011/12?
- Is the £40,000 minimum salary threshold for intra-company transfers seeking to stay 12 months or more a suitable proxy test to ensure that migrants meet the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) definition of senior Managers and Specialists? Please provide economic rather than legal advice when considering the compatibility of the definition. Should the £40,000 be a national rate or allow for regional variations in pay? Current policy allows the £40,000 threshold to be met through a combination of salary and allowances. Does the inclusion of allowances undermine the use of the £40,000 threshold as a proxy test of skill level?
- To identify an appropriate skill level for Tier 2, what would the impact on numbers of migrants in Tier 2 if the skills bar were raised from National Qualification Framework level 4 and above (NQF4+), to NQF6+ based on the list of occupations in Table B1 of its February 2011 report on the list of Tier 2 skilled occupations?
- Currently jobs paid more than £150,000 are exempt from the Resident Labour Market Test (RLMT) requirement to recognise that, at that level, there will be little threat of disturbance to the resident labour market as such jobs are likely to be more global in character. If the threshold were lowered to a range of £70,000-£100,000, what would be the impact on demand for Tier 2 visas, the resident labour force and employers?

The Committee is looking for responses to the call for evidence to be received by **21 December 2011**. The document will also be available at <http://www.bia.homeoffice.gov.uk/mac>.

Meat Processing Industry – Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) report follow up

The EHRC is currently conducting review of working conditions of migrant workers in the meat and poultry processing industry, following their original report which they published in March 2010

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/legal-and-policy/inquiries-and-assessments/inquiry-into-the-meat-and-poultry-processing-sectors>. They are now looking to review the extent to which relevant bodies have implemented this report's recommendations and whether progress has been made since then. In particular:

- Have workers noticed an improvement in the how they are treated or are they still experiencing poor treatment?
- What actions have agencies or processing firms taken to improve practices?
- Is there evidence of discrimination based on nationality or pregnancy that workers in the industry are finding?
- Is recruitment fair and transparent, providing equality of opportunity and transparent methods for transferring staff from agency to direct employment?
- Are agency staff used? By using them do firms avoid obligations coming from a direct employment relationship?
- What are firms doing to manage their migrant workforce – in particular regarding communication and cohesion?
- Are internal processes robust to allow workers to raise concerns with confidence?
- How well are firms ensuring the health and safety of agency and migrant workers?
- What examples of good practice exist?

Also, if you know of any workers in the meat and poultry industry who would agree to be interviewed confidentially, please contact Ruth Barnett at EHRC. There will be a small payment to say thank you (probably a voucher, but still to be finalised). Ruth can be contacted on t: 01223 221 903, f: 01223 372 862, m: 07792 193 992 e: ruth.barnett@equalityhumanrights.com or in writing to East of England Advisor, Equality and Human Rights Commission, Eastbrook, Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge CB2 8DF

United Nations General Assembly President urges end to migration myths

The President of the General Assembly urged the world to dispel entrenched myths about immigration and focus on migrants' contributions to economic development in countries of origin, transit and destination. The largest shares of migrants to total population are no longer found in Europe or North America, but in the Arab States in the Gulf. In those countries, international migrants make up more than half of the working age population. While abroad, most international migrants transfer remittances which contribute to the well-being of families and communities of origin. Last year, some \$325 billion was remitted to developing countries from their citizens working abroad, a figure that outpaced official development assistance. Please follow this link to read the article in full: <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=40032&Cr=migrants&Cr1>

UKBA publishes list of Tier 4 financial institutions which do not meet standards needed to support students applying for study in the UK

In June 2011, UKBA announced that they would be publishing a list of financial institutions which they consider do not verify financial statements to their satisfaction. They are now publishing their initial list of financial institutions that fall into this category. They will use the list when verifying maintenance funds under Tier 4 of the points-based system. An applicant will receive no points for maintenance if they submit documents showing that the funds are held in a financial institution on the list. The change is to ensure that UKBA can verify that student visa applicants hold the required maintenance funds to support themselves and pay for their course in the UK.

UKBA will give a 30-day notice period from the date when a financial institution is first listed before the new rule takes effect to enable applicants to make the necessary financial arrangements, so that they can provide financial documentation which meets the new requirements. The list will be kept under review, and UKBA will make additions or deletions as appropriate. Please follow this link to read the UKBA article and follow the link from there to the list of institutions: <http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/newsarticles/2011/october/57-financial-institutions>

Universal Access to healthcare in the age of migration – conference report from Migrants' Rights' Network (MRN)

MRN hosted a migrant health conference in September which drew on the experience of providing services to diverse communities in East London and provided a platform for sharing good practice. Please follow this link to read the report in full:

http://www.health4migrants.info/files/MRN_Health4Migrants_Summary_report_Oct-2011.pdf

Events

Afghani Young Men's Supper Club diary dates 2011 – 2012, Peterborough

The Millfield Medical centre in Peterborough hosts these supper clubs for young Afghani men and they have planned the dates for them through until next March. They are going to be between 8 and 10pm on the following Tuesdays: 1 November, 6 December, 10 January, 7 February and 6 March. For more information please contact either Suchitra Rampal on e: suchitra.rampal@cpft.nhs.uk or t: 01733 318104, Sarah Kennedy on e: skennedy3@nhs.net or Tracey Cook on e: tracey.cook@nhs.net or t: 01733 568987

Tackling health, social care and housing issues in Somali communities – Birmingham, 8 November

This seminar looks at the UK Somali communities, who are amongst the poorest in society, and as a consequence experience some of the worst health and housing conditions. Addressing these issues will help to address further social problems such as poor educational attainment of Somali young people. There are also problems particular to this community, such as a high proportion of single mothers heading up large extended families, the impact of khat and trauma from experiences in a war zone. A number of Somali families also participate in the practice of female genital mutilation.

This seminar is an opportunity to pool experience and good practice to assist in tackling the range of problems faced by Somali families. To see the full programme details please follow this link <http://www.cclimited.org.uk>. Places cost £140 plus VAT for small charities or £165 plus VAT for other delegates.

Global Migration: the challenges for the West's political leaders. London, 15 November 6pm – 7.30pm

This is a joint event between the All Party Parliamentary Group on Migration, Chatham House and the Migrants' Rights' Network and will be held at Chatham House. It will explore the key policy dilemmas raised by international migration for leaders of liberal democracies. In a world of growing mobility and with the debate on immigration increasingly polarised, how should political leaders address the key policy challenges of global migration? Drawing on perspectives from UK parliamentarians and other experts, the event will be an opportunity to discuss effective responses to the challenges – and opportunities – presented by global movements of people. Please follow this link to register to attend: <http://globalmigration.eventbrite.co.uk>

Funding

Broadland community partnership funding – to improve economic wellbeing in Broadland, Norfolk

Under the priority of “Jobs, Skills, Raising Aspirations” the Broadland Community Partnership (BCP) is looking to fund a single or small number of projects which will lead to improved economic wellbeing in Broadland, Norfolk. They anticipate that projects may achieve this through economic development, skills training, overcoming individual barriers to employment, or by raising the aspirations of those people who are currently excluded from the jobs market.

The launch date for the autumn commissioning round is **7 November**. All commissioning information, including the expression of interest form, commissioning brief, scoring criteria, and timetable for commissioning will be available on the Broadland Community Partnership webpage. The Broadland Community Partnership web page link is: <http://www.broadland.gov.uk/bcp> where the 2011 – 2014 action plan is available, including the outcomes set for autumn commissioning

For general information on the Broadland Community Partnership please check the web page or contact the BCP co-ordinator, Kate de Vries, e: community.partnership@broadland.gov.uk or t: 01603 430595 or by post: Broadland District Council offices, Thorpe Lodge, 1 Yarmouth Road, Norwich, NR7 0DU.

Jobs

Community Advocate for Kalayaan: West London, full time £28,000

Kalayaan is the charity which provides support services to migrant domestic workers. The position will be to:

- provide advice on immigration and employment issues
- lead a project supporting migrant domestic workers to access UK employment law
- support migrant domestic workers to access mainstream services and English classes
- campaign for migrant domestic workers' rights

Applications to reach Kalayaan by **9.30am** on **7 November 2011**. Interview date: **11 November 2011**.

Please follow these links to find the documents needed to apply for the position: [covering letter](#), [job description](#), [person specification](#), [application form](#) and [equal opportunities monitoring form](#).

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