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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 Regional Assembly (EERA) Strategic Migration Partnership, the East of England Development Agency (EEDA) and the Partnership Development Project (MENTER).

Asylum Seekers and Refugees

House of Commons Home Affairs Committee report - UK Border Agency: Follow-up on Asylum Cases and E-Borders Programme

In a report released on 7 April 2010, the Home Affairs Committee reiterates its concerns about the work of the UKBA and notes with disappointment the lack of progress in resolving major problems. The report follows up on two areas of major concern the Committee has had with the work of the UKBA: the backlog of asylum cases — and the UKBA's "unambitious" deadline for clearing it — and the e-borders programme, which the Committee reported earlier was probably unworkable under EU law.

Press release:

http://www.parliament.uk/parliamentary_committees/home_affairs_committee/100407b.cfm

Full report:

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200910/cmselect/cmhaff/406/406.pdf>

Refugee and Migrant Justice response:

<http://refugee-migrant-justice.org.uk/downloads/07-04-10%20chief%20inspector%20ukba%20report.pdf>

Refugee Council response:

http://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/news/archive/news/2010/april/080410_newshomeaffairsbacklog

Refugee Week East of England Regional Coordinator

Refugee Week this year will take place on 14-20 June. Shenaz Kedar is the Regional Coordinator for Refugee Week in the East of England. As regional coordinator, her brief includes serving as the main point of contact between the central team and organisations involved in Refugee Week activity in the region, promoting Refugee Week to new groups, supporting organisations through the promotion of available tools from the central [Refugee Week website](#) and addressing with the central Refugee Week team any issues that organisations face. Her email address is: rweesk@googlemail.com.

Refugee Council Conference 2010 report now online

The Refugee Council has published the 2010 conference report on their website. The topic of the conference which took place on 5 February 2010 was "From theory to practice: How asylum policy impacts on the refugee experience"

Press release:

<http://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/eventsandtraining/conferences/archive/conference2010>

Conference report:

<http://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/Resources/Refugee%20Council/downloads/eventsAndtraining/conference/RConf%20Feb%202010%20report.pdf>

Migration

Guidance for local authorities on assessing A8 and A2 migrants with no recourse to public funds

This guidance outlines the process of assessing single adults and adults with children from Accession 8 and Accession 2 EEA countries for entitlement to support from Social Services departments.

Particular attention is given to the Human Rights Assessment and options for alternative support where there is no statutory duty to provide services.

Guidance:

http://www.islington.gov.uk/DownloadableDocuments/HealthandSocialCare/Pdf/nrpf_A8-A2_guidance.pdf

Updated guidance for local authorities on assessing and supporting victims of domestic violence who have no recourse to public funds

This guidance outlines the process of assessing victims of domestic violence with no recourse to public funds. It considers cases involving children and those involving single adults only. The guidance provides details on the Home Office funding scheme for local authorities, refuges and other organisations supporting victims of domestic violence with NRPF.

Guidance:

http://www.islington.gov.uk/DownloadableDocuments/HealthandSocialCare/Pdf/nrpf_dv_guidance.pdf

Changes to the Immigration Rules - minimum age for armed forces marriage visas

On 6 April the Immigration Rules relating to marriage visas have changed for serving members of the armed forces. The marriage visa age is being lowered to 18 for serving members of the armed forces and their partners. This recognises the partners' role in supporting those on the front line, and reflects the unique circumstances in which the armed forces operate.

Press release:

<http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/newsarticles/2010/april/82-changes-to-the-ir>

New rules for skilled and highly skilled migrant workers

Changes to Tiers 1 and 2 of the points-based system came into effect on 6 April 2010.

The changes were recommended by the Migration Advisory Committee, and were accepted by the government on 18 March 2010.

Press release:

<http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/newsarticles/2010/april/04-new-rules-t1t2>

Tier 4 changes for education providers and migrant students

Changes to the Immigration Rules came into force on 6 April 2010, affecting migrant students and educational providers which sponsor them under Tier 4 of the points-based system.

The Immigration Rules now encompass changes from the Tier 4 review, including the rules governing the new Highly Trusted sponsor licence. Only sponsors who hold a Highly Trusted sponsor licence can now offer the following courses, known as 'restricted courses', to Tier 4 (General) students:

- courses at National Qualifications Framework (NQF) level 3 or equivalent; and
- courses below degree level that include a work placement (other than foundation degrees, which can still be offered with a work placement by any Tier 4 (General) sponsor).

Education providers who hold a standard Tier 4 sponsor licence can only offer courses at or above NQF level 4 or equivalent. And they cannot offer courses that include work placements unless those courses are degree-level courses or foundation degrees.

Press release:

<http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/newsarticles/2010/april/03-t4-changes>

House of Commons Health Committee report: The use of overseas doctors in providing out-of-hours services

The Health Select Committee has published a report on its recent inquiry on the use of overseas doctors in providing out-of-hours services.

Press release:

<http://www.nhsconfed.org/OurWork/latestnews/Pages/HSC.aspx>

Report:

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200910/cmselect/cmhealth/441/441.pdf>

Race Equality Foundation's new websites

<http://www.raceequalityfoundation.org.uk/>

The Race Equality Foundation has just launched two new websites which support using evidence to promote race equality:

1. "Better Housing"

<http://www.better-housing.org.uk/index.htm>

Includes links to useful resources at: <http://www.better-housing.org.uk/resources.htm>.

2. "Better Health"

<http://www.better-health.org.uk/>

Also links to useful resources at: <http://www.better-health.org.uk/resources.htm>

Events

Migration Impacts Fund East of England regional conference - 26 May 2010

Rowley Mile Conference Centre, Newmarket Racecourse

The Migration Impacts Fund was announced in March 2009 by the Department for Communities and Local Government and is financed by a levy on migrants that apply to come and work in the UK. The money has been made available to over thirty projects in the East of England to help reduce some of the pressures on local services.

The aim of the conference is to showcase the achievements and share the good practice that has been developed by the various regional projects that received funding from the Migration Impacts Fund during 2009 – 2010.

Who should attend this conference?

Anyone from the public, private or voluntary sector that provides support services to migrants in the East of England.

Representatives from the projects that received funding from MIF should attend and the conference will also provide an excellent opportunity for representatives from the region's multi-agency forums (MAFs) that support migrants to share good practice and learn about innovative projects from around the region.

There will be **no charge** to attend this event but places are limited.

To book a place:

For further information about this event and to book a place, please select the following link: www.eelga.gov.uk and click onto events. Alternatively, please contact Jayne Cole, Tel: 01284 729405; Fax: 01284 729429; email – jayne.cole@eelga.gov.uk

Direct link to further information, draft agenda and online booking form:

<http://www.eelga.gov.uk/events/view-event.aspx?ID=2191>

Funding

The Woodward Charitable Trust – funding for BME, Refugees, Travellers

The Woodward Charitable Trust is one of the Sainsbury Family Charitable Trusts.

The Trustees favour small-scale, locally based initiatives. Funding is primarily for one-off projects, but the Trustees are willing to consider funding for start-up or running costs (including core costs and salaries). They only fund registered charities, schools or churches. They do not fund Community Interest Companies.

Trustees review grant applications twice a year, usually in January and July. All general applications forms for the July round should reach the office by **24 May 2010**.

Further information and application forms:

<http://www.woodwardcharitabletrust.org.uk/guidelines.html>

Jobs

Policy Officer (Strategic Migration Partnership) - SCP 29/34 £24,646 - £28,636

Contract duration: until 31 March 2012

You will be assisting with the management of the East of England LGA Strategic Migration Partnership's responsibilities for Asylum, Refugee Integration and Migration in collaboration with key regional partners, including the development, implementation and monitoring of the business plan and associated strategies and initiatives.

For an informal discussion please contact Ian Beattie, Team Leader – Regional Policy on 01284 729413.

The closing date for applications is **23 April 2010**. Interviews will take place at the East of England LGA's offices at Flempton House, Bury St Edmunds on 30 April 2010.

For full details of the post and an application form please contact Val Seaman on 01284729435 or email Valerie.seaman@eelga.gov.uk or download the application pack from our website: <http://www.eera.gov.uk/Who-we-are/working-for-us/policy-officer-smp->

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