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The Newsflash is a monthly 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 by the East of England Local Government Association - Strategic Migration Partnership.

Asylum Seekers and Refugees - including vulnerable refugee resettlement

New report from Refugee Action - Waiting in the Dark: how the asylum system dehumanises, disempowers and damages

Between January and March 2018, Refugee Action spoke to 40 people who have first-hand experience of claiming asylum. During these interviews, researchers heard about traumatic encounters with the Home Office, as well as poor practice at all stages of an unfair and adversarial system. Their research reveals a process that damages, dehumanises and disempowers those who rely on it to make life-changing decisions. Please follow this link to read the report in full: [Waiting in the Dark: how the asylum system dehumanises, disempowers and damages - Refugee Action](#)

Government immigration statistics, year ending March 2018 – asylum and refugee resettlement

In the year ending March 2018, there were 14,166 grants of asylum, alternative forms of protection and resettlement, down 11% compared with 15,973 in the previous year. This comprised:

- 6,865 grants of asylum to main applicants and dependents (down 17%)
- 1,541 grants of alternative form of protection to main applicants and their dependents (up 16%)
- 5,760 people provided with protection under a resettlement scheme (down 9%)

In this quarter, the East of England resettled 49 refugees under the Vulnerable Persons Programme, plus beneficiaries under the Vulnerable Children's Scheme (this data is not broken down by region). Please follow this link to access the summary data: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-statistics-year-ending-march-2018/summary-of-latest-statistics>

Please follow this link to read a response to the data from the Refugee Council:

https://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/latest/news/5263_latest_immigration_statistics_published

Please follow this link to read a response to the data from Refugee Action:

<https://www.refugee-action.org.uk/leading-refugee-charities-call-for-new-commitment-on-refugee-resettlement-post-2020/>

NSPCC report: Uprooted and unprotected - A multi-agency approach to safeguarding children forced into migration through northern France

The NSPCC's Child Trafficking Advice Centre (CTAC) advises professionals in the UK on child trafficking cases and works with agencies around the world to prevent child trafficking. This report highlights learning from CTAC's work with the Refugee Youth Service (RYS), safeguarding children who had lived in the Calais 'Jungle'. RYS refers children to CTAC when it suspects they have moved from France to the UK. CTAC then shares child protection information with relevant UK agencies and tries to establish the children's whereabouts. This report is accompanied by a workbook for professionals to use with young people who have been forced into migration and may have stayed in camps in northern France. The resource is now available to social workers to help them better understand the needs of children who have been trafficked or are at risk of being trafficked. Please follow this link to read the report in full: [Uprooted and unprotected | NSPCC](#)

MEPs support reforms to speed up assessment of asylum requests in the EU

A new Regulation on a common procedure for granting international protection in the EU, which lays down how national authorities are to manage asylum applications, was backed by the Civil Liberties MEPs. The text aims to ensure asylum applications are processed more consistently across the EU, so as to discourage applicants from lodging multiple applications in different member states. Please follow this link to read the announcement in full: [meps-support-reforms-to-speed-up-assessment-of-asylum-requests-in-the-eu](#)

Coram Children's Legal Centre - Migrant Children's Project Newsletter, latest edition issued

This latest newsletter includes articles on the immigration bail and study ban, and routes to settlement for undocumented young people, plus details of a new leaflet on section 3c leave and new training courses from Coram. Please follow this link to access these resources and more: <https://mailchi.mp/may-newsletter>

Migration

Government immigration statistics, year ending March 2018 – work, study and family

There were 162,874 Work-related visas granted in the year ending March 2018, 1% fewer than the previous year. This included:

- 5,198 high-value (Tier 1) visas, up 11%
- 93,048 Skilled (Tier 2) visas, down 1%
- 40,472 youth mobility and temporary workers (Tier 5), down 3%
- 24,156 non-points-based system (PBS) / other Work visas, no change from the previous year

In the year ending March 2018, there were 223,839 Tier 4 Study-related visas granted, a 7% increase on the previous year. Over the same period, the number of University-sponsored study visa applications rose 6% to 178,612. This included an 8% increase for Russell Group universities to 87,175. Three nationalities (Chinese, Indian and US) accounted for over half the study-related visas granted, with the largest number granted to Chinese nationals or 40% of the total. The combined total number of Family-related visas granted fell by 1% to 134,789 in the year ending March 2018. Please follow this link to access the summary data:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-statistics-year-ending-march-2018/summary-of-latest-statistics>

Office for National Statistics (ONS) - Population of the UK by country of birth and nationality: 2017

The ONS has released the latest UK population estimates (excluding some residents in communal establishments) by country of birth and nationality, by Region and Local\Unitary authorities. Non-UK born and non-British populations continued to increase in 2017, as more people continue to come to the UK to live than move to live abroad for a year or more. Poland-born residents and Polish nationals were the most common populations from outside the UK, with an estimated 1 million Polish nationals now living in the UK. However, the largest increases in population were seen from those born in Romania and those with Romanian nationality. Please follow this link to access the data in full:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/internationalmigration/bulletins/ukpopulationbycountryofbirthandnationality/2017>

The Home Affairs Committee publishes correspondence between the Chair and the Home Secretary concerning request for further information on Windrush

The Home Secretary's letter includes information on the Windrush generation (people contacted, people enquiring about refused re-entry, and further information on people affected) and on people holding Tier 1 visas refused leave to remain under 322(5) of the immigration rules, including the number who have applied for judicial review. Please follow this link to read the correspondence in full: parliament.uk/home-affairs-committee/news-parliament-2017/windrush-correspondence-publication-17-19/

Home Secretary launches Windrush scheme legislation

The legislation will enable the government to begin processing citizenship applications for the Windrush generation – Commonwealth nationals who settled in the UK before 1973 – free of charge. Free citizenship applications for children of the Windrush generation who joined their parents before they turned 18 and free confirmation of the existing British citizenship for children born to the Windrush generation in the UK where needed – will also be able to start. Please follow this link to read the announcement in full: [Home Secretary launches Windrush scheme - GOV.UK](#)

Government updates guidance for those Commonwealth citizens and others concerned about their immigration status

Please follow this link for information on the ‘Windrush’ scheme for Commonwealth citizens and others who have been in the UK for a long time and are worried about their immigration status: www.gov.uk/government/publications/undocumented-commonwealth-citizens-resident-in-the-uk

Free Movement blog examines the data around visa quota and resulting number of refused high skilled visas

Using Freedom of Information data, the immigration and asylum blog researchers at Free Movement have looked at data going back to November – December 2017 when the number of visa applications exceeded the government’s quota limit. They have found that month on month since then, the number of high skilled visa applications being declined has grown, the number of points needed to secure a visa has risen meaning that now, only those with a job paying more than £50,000 are likely to be granted a visa. Please follow this link to read the article in full: freemovement.org.uk/tier-2-visa-cap-pressure-new-figures

Guardian article that highlights the number of visas for NHS doctors refused in last five months

The article reports on data obtained by a freedom of information enquiry from solicitors Eversheds Sutherland that reveals that more than 2,300 visa applications have been refused – meaning that only one in three applications have been accepted. Please follow this link to read the article in full: theguardian.com/uk-visa-applications-doctors-thousands-refused-figures-show-nhs

National Insurance numbers allocated to adult overseas nationals – to March 2018

The data shows a 15% reduction in national insurance (NI) numbers allocated to overseas nationals in the year up to March 2018. Most overseas nationals registering for an NI number are from the EU, but it is chiefly EU nationals whose numbers are dropping most markedly. 148,000 Romanian nationals registered for NI numbers last year, down by 19%, and 30% fewer Poles registered in the same timeframe. 34,000 Indians registered, down by 3%. Only Pakistani nationals’ registrations for NI have increased year on year, by 10%. Nationalities with the largest increases in registrations in the year to March 2018 are: Turkey up 41% to 4,500, Pakistan (see above), Iran up 22% to 4,500 and Iraq up 45% to 2,600. Those regions with largest numbers of NI numbers allocated to overseas nationals are London, South East, East of England and West Midlands. Please follow this link to access the data in full: attachment_data/file/710324/nino-registrations-adult-overseas-nationals-march-2018.pdf

Ernst and Young report - The UK's future immigration system and access to talent

This new report sets out a renewed and dynamic approach to the UK’s immigration system. It urges the government to reform the UK immigration system to ensure Britain remains a globally competitive financial centre beyond Brexit. While the recommendations focus on the immigration needs of the financial and related professional services industry, it can be applied across all sectors. Please follow this link to access the report: <https://www.thecityuk.com/research/the-uks-future-immigration-system-and-access-to-talent>

Guardian article – EU workers in the grey economy who may not be able to register for settled status after Brexit

The article reports concerns from the East European Resource Centre in London which has highlighted the vulnerability of Poles, Bulgarians and Romanians working in the grey economy for unscrupulous employers who would not be able to supply paperwork to be able to register for settled status. Please follow this link to read the article in full: www.theguardian.com/concerns-for-eastern-europeans-in-brex-it-settled-status-plan

Briefing from End Violence against Women - Hostile Environment' immigration policy sees abused women without support and deported

Women's groups ask the government to put safety of women before immigration enforcement. This briefing details how abusers are using immigration rules to threaten women, and government focus on deportation instead of support is putting women at risk. Please follow this link to read the briefing in full: <https://www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk/hostile-environment-immigration-policy-sees-abused-women-without-support-and-deported/>

Joint Council for Welfare of Immigrants (JCWI) launches legal challenge on 'right to rent' checks – Guardian article

Please follow this link to read the article which outlines why JCWI have been given permission to fight the immigration checks which landlords must undertake on prospective tenants: theguardian.com/government-faces-high-court-challenge-right-rent-scheme

Home Office delivery of Brexit: immigration: Government Response to the Committee's Third Report of Session 2017–19

Please follow this link to access the response from the Government to the five recommendations in the report from the Home Affairs select committee on EU immigration as part of the delivery of Brexit: <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmselect/cmhaff/1075/107502.htm>

Events

Refugee Week: a selection of events across the region from 14 – 24 June

This year marks 20 years of Refugee Week. To mark this anniversary, people are encouraged to do one of 20 Simple Acts. See below for details of how you can join in in the East of England.

These are actions that anyone can do to stand together with refugees and unite people across the UK.**Human Cargo with Matthew Crampton & Jeff Warner – 14 June, Halesworth**

This North Suffolk performance of story and song at the Cut partners with [Suffolk Refugee Support](#) as part of the show's [Parallel Lives](#) project. Members of the group will be at The Cut on the night to talk about their work. *Human Cargo* includes local stories and links with local organisations. Join this performance at 7.30pm.

Photoeast photographic display – 14 June onwards, Ipswich

At locations around the Ipswich Waterfront and La Tour café are a series of photographs on the theme of refuge, featuring local and European photographs of refugees being made welcome.

Launch event – 15 June, Norwich

New Routes is launching Refugee Week in Norwich with an event in the foyer of Norwich City Hall, taking place from 6.00pm to 7.30pm. Light refreshments will be served and attendees can meet the organisations that work with refugees and asylum seekers in Norfolk. Anyone wishing to attend should contact Amélie at New Routes on e: intern@newroutes.org.uk before 8 June.

Place Theatre refugee productions – 17, 19 and 20 June, Bedford

Three events from the Palace Theatre: on June 17, the theatre will be hosting 'Human Cargo' with Matthew Crampton and Jeff Warner, an evening of song and storytelling from 7.30pm, delivered in partnership with [Bedford Refugee & Asylum Seeker Support](#) (BRASS). On June 19, they will be screening the film 'A Syrian Love Story' at 7pm. On June 20, 8 refugees from Afghanistan, Eritrea and Albania will be performing 'Dear Home Office – Still Pending' at 7pm.

Lecture on refugees in Suffolk – 19 June, Ipswich

Suffolk Refugee Support are delivering this lecture on the history of refugees in Suffolk at the university on the Waterfront at 7.30pm, with food served before at 6.45pm.

International Flavours – 20 June, Norwich

Join us from 10am to 4pm at St Stephen's Church, 2 Rampant Horse Street NR2 1QY and get a taste of cakes from all around the world! Here you can find out more about the work we do at English+.

Refugees and Migrants Photo Exhibition – 20 June, Tilbury

An exhibition of photography which showcases the talents of Tilbury's Refugee and Migrant Women's Group. The exhibition explores themes essential to Refugee/Migrant identity and life. Through various workshops with photojournalists Mary Turner and Susan Craig-Greene, the women's group explored the critical meaning behind Refugee/Migrant culture and identity. This includes the meanings of home, gender empowerment, security, safety, faith and most importantly, hope. The exhibition is at Tilbury Red Cross Hall, Bermuda Rd, RM18 7DA from 4pm to 6pm.

Sewing Project Exhibition – 19 and 20 June, Luton

This year the British Red Cross is sharing their service users' stories through fabrics, threads and buttons to create a showcase of cultures, languages and religions in the community. Participants from the British Red Cross Refugee Support weekly drop-in are joining together to design and create stunning pieces for this exhibition, on display on Melson's Square in The Mall, Luton (opposite Poundland and Rymans).

Refugee Crisis: Challenges and Opportunities in Creative Practice Research – 20 June, Cambridge

To commemorate National Refugee Week, Anglia Ruskin University is planning a one-day symposium to examine creative responses to the current refugee crisis in Europe and beyond. Please follow this link for more information and to register to attend: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/refugee-crisis-challenges-and-opportunities-in-creative-practice-research-tickets-44802445320>

Refugee Week event: refugees and mental health – 21 June, Norwich

This event is a showing of the video that looks at the multifaceted problems that refugees settling in the UK face. The event includes contribution from Dr Yasir Hameed from UEA medical school who has expertise in managing mental health for those exposed to trauma during conflict. The event is taking place at the Wellbeing Centre, Holland Court, The Close NR1 4DY from 2.30-4pm. Please confirm participation by contacting Paola on e: Paola.Colombo@nsft.nhs.uk

Herts Welcomes Syrian Families music, stories and talks from Hertfordshire refugees – 21 June, St Albans

In collaboration with St Albans Folk Music and St Albans Amnesty International Group, this event will take place at 8pm in the Trinity United Reform Church, 1 Beaconsfield Road, AL1 3RD. The evening will feature songs from Na-Mara, talks by historians Kate Morris and Ken Griffin, stories from Syrian refugees now settled in Hertfordshire and Syrian/Middle Eastern food prepared by local Syrian families. Free Admission. Donations welcome.

A Syrian Supper Evening – 22 June, Berkhamsted

Organised by People not Borders and Herts Welcomes Syrian Families Dacorum branch to take place at 7.30pm at the Friends' Meeting House 289 High Street HP4 1AJ. Minimum donation of £5. To attend, please contact John Borton on e: john@hwsf.org.uk

Peterborough Sudanese Community Group launch event – 23 June, Peterborough

This event is to celebrate the launch of the first Sudanese Community Association in Peterborough. Please come and help celebrate at the end of Refugee Week 2018 from 6pm onwards at 19 Fitzwilliam Street, PE1 2RU. There will be the chance to try Sudanese food and listen to live Sudanese music. Anyone who would like to attend, please let the organiser know on e: sudanesecommunity2017@gmail.com.

Norfolk Knitters and Stitches: 20 things to make a difference – 23 June, Diss

A display of 20 things that make a difference – from finger puppets for Syrian children learning English, to quilts to welcome new arrivals in Norwich and warm clothes for displaced people. The display is at the Diss Wool Shed Methodist Church Rooms IP22 4EY from 10am to 1pm.

Walk a Mile for child refugees – 23 June, Cambridge

Join SOS Children's Villages UK to Walk a Mile through Cambridge to show solidarity with child refugees. Hear expert opinion on the child refugee crisis from MP for Cambridge Daniel Zeichner and SOS Children's Villages UK CEO Alison Wallace. Meet at 10.30 am at Parker's Piece CB1 1JE. Then join fellow supporters at a Great Get Together at Emmanuel United Reformed Church. Please bring your own food and soft drinks.

ESOLTHON from tefugees – 23 to 24 June, Cambridge

A hackathon at Makespace Cambridge, creating resources for ESOL teachers working with refugees and creating a new portal for ESOL teachers in 24 hours. Start at 2pm Saturday 23 June, finish at 6pm Sunday 24. Please follow this link to register: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/cambridge-esolthon-tickets-46764954237>

5-a-side Football Tournament – Bedford, 24 June

This tournament will be taking place in Russell Park from 10.00 -16.00. In addition to the tournament, there will be bouncy castles for children and the Mayor will present the prizes. For more information, please contact BRASS on e: brian@brass27b.org or alternatively by phone on t: 01234 211381. Visit: www.brassbedford.org.uk

Refugee week closing party – 24 June, Norwich

The Norwich Integration Partnership (New Routes, English+ and Bridge Plus+) is holding this celebration event at the Norwich Arts Centre from 7pm to 11pm, with proceeds to the Norwich Integration Partnership.

European Voices – 29 June, Cambridge

New Europeans are holding this event at the Memorial Unitarian Church on Emmanuel Road CB1 1JW from 6.30pm. EU27 citizens are invited to meet Cambridge MP Daniel Zeichner, to talk to him about their rights as EU citizens in the UK after Britain leaves the EU, where Britain's negotiations with EU are currently and what the implications are for them as a result. Please register to attend by following this link: <https://www.meetup.com/es/New-Europeans-Cambridge/events/250979145/>

Triple Planning training for professionals working with unaccompanied asylum seeking children - 2 July, Birmingham

This course is for all those who are involved in working with or supporting unaccompanied asylum seeking children and care leavers, including managers, social workers, personal advisors, support workers, independent reviewing officers and foster carers, who will be involved in undertaking needs assessments and pathway planning. The course covers relevant legislation and best practice, and will explore the implications of the introduction of the Immigration Act 2016. Participants gain an understanding of how to plan for the three possible outcomes for those with uncertain immigration status beyond the age of 18, including considerations when undertaking lawful assessments of educational need, and best practice when preparing young people for return to country of origin. Places cost £125 plus VAT. The course is delivered by Helen Guizani and Felix Kupay, who are experienced practitioners currently working with UASC who between them, have over 20 years' experience, and are thus able to share their practice knowledge and experience. For further information and to book a place please contact Felix on e: info@entraideuk.org.uk, m: 07948602313 or www.entraideuk.org.uk

Refugee Community Sponsorship Information Event – 3 July, Bedford

This information event will be held from 2-5pm at King's House. This is an opportunity for individuals or groups interested in Community Sponsorship to hear more about it, how it works and what the requirements are. It'll also give delegates a chance to hear from a group who are currently community sponsors and meet others who are considering this journey! Please save the date and await the Eventbrite invite. For more information, please contact Chris on e: chris.keating@kingsarmsproject.org

Training Day on refugee community sponsorship with Refugee Action – 19 July, Bedford

This training day will take place between 9am-5pm at King's House. It is for groups who are either applying for, or preparing to apply for Community Sponsorship. This training day will give an overview of the application process, what to expect when your family arrive, how to support them, and cultural awareness. Places will be limited to 25 total. Please save the date and await the Eventbrite invite. For more information, please contact Chris on e: chris.keating@kingsarmsproject.org

Universal Credit training day from Child Poverty Action Group – 27 September, Kings Lynn

The introduction of universal credit (UC) represents a fundamental change to the system of 'legacy benefits' and tax credits it is replacing. This one-day introductory course provides an overview of UC, covering:

- The aims and principles of UC;
- The roll-out of UC in 'gateway' and 'full service' areas;
- Who can claim UC;
- How it is calculated and paid;
- Conditionality and sanctions

The course is designed for anyone working with low-income families who needs to know the basics of UC to help clients maximise their income. This could include advice workers, social workers and tenant support workers. It is suitable for those with limited knowledge of the benefit system. The course is being hosted by Access in their offices at 41 Old Hospital Mews, Hospital Walk PE30 5RU from 9.45am to 4.30pm at a reduced rate of £80 per place (usually £138 plus travel to London). Anyone who would like to book a space or for any further details on the training please contact Sarah Parker on e: info@accessmigrantsupport.org.uk.

Migration Statistics User Forum ((MSUF): save the date – London, 19 October

This year's Migration Statistics User Forum (MSUF) Conference will take place in facilities being provided by the Home Office at the London HQ at 2 Marsham Street. Further details and a programme will follow in the summer. In the meantime, please do hold the date in your diaries. For more information, please contact the organisers on e: MIGRATION-STATS@JISMAIL.AC.UK

Funding

Strategic Legal Fund Offer Funding to Support Vulnerable Young Migrants

Managed by the Immigration Law Practitioners' Association, the Strategic Legal Fund (SLF) offers funding to support legal work in the UK that goes beyond securing justice for an individual and makes a significant contribution to law, practice and procedures to uphold and promote the rights of vulnerable migrant children and young people more generally. The Fund provides grants of up to £30,000, although the average grant is £12,000, to fund pre-litigation research and third party intervention that are likely to benefit vulnerable young migrants, defined as:

- Migrants or the children of migrants, who are under 25 years, are living in poverty and who face significant disadvantage or discrimination in connection with their (or their parents') migration status.

The SLF funds strategic legal work in any area of law where vulnerable young migrants experience disadvantage or discrimination as a result of migration status. This includes (but is not restricted to) potential cases in the areas of:-

- Immigration, asylum and asylum support and human rights
- Education, housing and welfare benefits
- Discrimination and access to justice
- Community care

SLF does not usually fund work involving issues of criminal or family law unless they also involve one of the above issues. Please note that the SLF ONLY funds research that is tied to the possible future taking of legal cases. It does not fund general research or campaigning work. The next deadlines for application are **6 July and 7 September 2018**. For more information, please follow this link: <http://www.strategiclegalfund.org.uk/>

Jobs

There are no job updates in this edition

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