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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 refugee resettlement

Home Office Statistics – refugee resettlement

The Home Office published their statistics (year ending September 2019) on the Vulnerable Person Resettlement Scheme (VPRS) accounted for just over three-quarters (4,291) of those resettled in the UK in the year ending September 2019. Since it began in 2014, 18,252 people (mainly Syrian nationals) have been resettled under the scheme. A further 637 people were resettled under the Vulnerable Children Resettlement Scheme (VCRS) over the last year. Up until 30 September 2019, the East of England has resettled 856 people through the VPRS scheme and 89 people through the VCRS scheme, a total of 945 people across them both. With the continuing support of our councils, we expect to reach 1000 resettled refugees in the east of England in January 2020.

Please follow this link to access the resettlement data and other asylum seeker statistics:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-statistics-year-ending-september-2019/how-many-people-do-we-grant-asylum-or-protection-to#about-the-statistics>

Home Office Statistics – asylum seeker applications and support

At the end of September 2019, 44,156 asylum seekers in the UK were in receipt of support under Section 95 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, up 2% from the same time the previous year. Of these, 41,214 (93%) were in receipt of both accommodation and subsistence, and 2,942 (7%) in receipt of subsistence only. The majority (82%) were in England. UASC accounted for 10% of total asylum applications in the latest year. As at 30 September 2019, the East of England asylum accommodation providers, Clearsprings in Essex, Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire and Serco in Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire was providing homes for 825 asylum seekers, up from 810 the previous year. Please follow this link to access the asylum seeker statistics broken down by local council area:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-statistics-year-ending-september-2019/how-many-people-do-we-grant-asylum-or-protection-to#about-the-statistics>

Refugee Action has responded to the latest immigration figures, which show 58% of people awaiting an initial decision on their claim had waited more than six months – a 9% increase on the previous year. Please follow this link to read their press release in full: <https://www.refugee-action.org.uk/immigration-statistics-show-more-people-waiting-over-six-months-for-an-asylum-decision/>

Social Market Foundation (SMF) report: Between a rock and a hard place - AVR 2.0: the case for rebooting Assisted Voluntary Return (AVR) in the UK's immigration control regime

The report looks at what to do about migrants who are in the UK but who do not, or did but no longer, have the lawful permission to be here. The SMF report finds that those on both sides of the immigration debate are failing to meaningfully engage with this issue at all. The author concludes that Assisted Voluntary Return is not only worthy of rebooting as a policy in its own right, but provides a key entry point through which both sides can engage in a much more realistic debate about what immigration control in the UK could, and should, look like. Please follow this link to read the report in full: smf.co.uk/Between-a-rock-and-a-hard-place.pdf

Refugee entrepreneurship pilot programme from Menta and East of England Strategic Migration Partnership

Refugees looking to start a business in Ipswich, Norwich and Peterborough are invited to participate in this programme of support. Those taking part will benefit from workshops on managing business finances, bookkeeping and social media. They will be helped to develop a business plan and be matched with a mentor who can help them get started. For more information and to register, please contact Gill on e: refugees@linguagloss.com or m: 0788 4433 586 or Monica on e: monica@menta.org.uk t: 01284 760206 or m: 07535 027484

Refugee Council launches stop motion animation ‘Without my Mum’

The animation tells the story of a mother and her son whose relationship changes forever when the threat of violence forces the mother to make a decision: stay in their home as it becomes a conflict zone or protect her son and get him to safety. She chooses the latter, and though her son finds safety in Britain, and support from a foster family, the ending is far from happy with the boy bereft at the separation from his mother, broken by the prospect of a future without her. Please follow this link for more information and to see the animated film: [Puppet animation illustrates family separation through eyes of lone refugee child - Refugee Council](#)

Migration Policy Institute (MPI) survey - recent asylum seeker and refugee arrivals to Germany are getting into labour force more quickly

Drawing on a dataset which surveyed 7,430 refugees and asylum seekers, the report for MPI’s Transatlantic Council on Migration tracked newcomers arriving in Germany between 2013 and the end of 2016 to assess their economic and social integration trajectories. It also offers insights into the population’s demographic and socioeconomic characteristics. With Germany receiving around half of the 3.1 million asylum applications submitted within the European Union between 2015-17, how the newcomers are faring is of significant interest within and beyond the country. It examines the new series of policy changes introduced to manage its migration and integration challenges. The analysis finds these policies have had “ambiguous” integration outcomes because of their competing nature, on the one hand seeking to integrate newcomers while also reducing factors that might attract further asylum seekers. Please follow this link to access the report in full: <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/integrating-refugees-asylum-seekers-germany>

Dubs amendment watered down in new EU Withdrawal Bill – Guardian article

The Guardian reports that the new EU Withdrawal Bill changes the Dubs amendment, meaning that the commitment to unaccompanied refugee children changes from a legal promise to an aim. Please follow this link to read the article in full: <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/dec/19/johnson-revises-eu-bill-to-limit-parliaments-role-in-brex-it-talks>

Migration

New guidance from Coram and partners available on legal aid for separated children

In October 2019, the Government amended the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012, bringing all non-asylum immigration and citizenship matters for separated children back into the scope of legal aid. Coram Children’s Legal Centre with other organisations, have put together a practical guidance document to raise awareness of the change and the types of children and cases that are covered. To access this guidance, please follow this link: https://www.childrenslegalcentre.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/NGO_briefing_Legal_Aid_provision_Nov19_FINAL.pdf

Home Office child citizenship fees found to be unlawful in High Court judgement

The Guardian published an article on how the high court has found the Home Office's £1,012 child citizenship fee is unlawful. The fee has been described as "shameless profiteering" by Amnesty International. It is estimated that there are 120,000 children in the UK without British citizenship, approximately 65,000 of whom were born here. According to the Home Office, the cost of processing a child citizenship application is just £372, so the department makes a profit of £640 on the registration of each child. Please follow this link to read the article in full: <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2019/dec/19/high-court-says-uks-1012-child-citizenship-fee-is-unlawful>

Coram Children's Legal Centre, Migrant Children's Project Newsletter - December 2019

This edition reports on the High Court ruling that the £1,012 fee the Home Office charges children to register as a British citizen was unlawful. The case was brought by the Project for the Registration of Children as British Citizens (PRCBC) and the article directs readers to the PRCBC website for updates <https://prcbc.org/>. There is also an article about the 'Families across borders' (FAB) project which was set up to improve the quality and expand the availability of family-based care for unaccompanied migrant children. Please follow this link to access the resources which the project developed: [FAB project website](#). They also report on the 'no study' conditions which the Home Office were challenged on by two ARE individuals who were preparing fresh claims for asylum. Duncan Lewis represented the young people – the 'no study' conditions were removed before the substantive hearing. The Home Office have also agreed to review and revise the immigration bail guidance. Please follow this link to read the news letter in full: [MCP December newsletter - citizenship fees unlawful, FAB project, 'no study' conditions & more](#)

Department for Work and Pensions data release – National Insurance Numbers issued to overseas nationals

This data release covers the period of year ending September 2019. A total of 752,000 national insurance numbers were issued in this period, with 457,000 to EU citizens and 293,000 to non-EU applicants. EU applicants are up 7% from 2018, and non-EU applicants are up 50%. The EU countries showing the biggest change in actual numbers of applications are Spain and Italy, both up 18% from 2018, Bulgaria up 13% and Romania up 1%, while Polish applications are down by 10%. The non-EU countries showing the biggest change in actual numbers of applications are India (up 99%), Nigeria (up 48%), United States (up 45%), Pakistan (up 37%) and China (up 25%). Please follow this link to access the data in full: [government/summary-nino-registrations-adult-overseas-nationals-september-2019.pdf](#)

Home Office EU Settlement Scheme statistics, November 2019

This report provides monthly statistics on applications made to the EU Settlement Scheme. The number of applications received in November 2019 was 142,300. Overall, the total number of applications received up to 30 November 2019 was nearly 2.6 million (2,592,800). The number of applications concluded in November 2019 was 305,600. Of these, 52% were granted settled status and 47% were granted pre-settled status. One application was refused on suitability grounds during the period from 01 November to 30 November 2019. Overall, the total number of applications that have been concluded, as of 30 November 2019, was more than 2.2 million (2,230,900). Of these, 59% were granted settled status, 41% were granted pre-settled status, and five applications were refused on suitability grounds. Please follow this link to access the data in full: [EU Settlement Scheme statistics, November 2019 - GOV.UK](#)

New document from the Home Office for EUSS advisers – guidance for immigration advice at level 1

This document sets out in accessible terms, what individuals and community/voluntary groups can legally do to advise or assist people with immigration queries. Please follow this link to access the document in full: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-assistance?utm_source=5a056df3-3c2b-4c29-9575-fa73657d5e17&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=daily

New ID scanner locations for EUSS applicants in Essex

Please follow this link to the updated list of locations where you can go to get your biometric ID document scanned if you do not have an Android device with near field communication (NFC). Locations in Essex added in Basildon, Chelmsford, Colchester and Harlow. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/eu-settlement-scheme-id-document-scanner-locations?utm_source=5c50db60-84e0-4537-8114-34acc10f22ca&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=daily

EU-Voice project running in Ipswich to March 2021 – active participation in community life

The EU-Voice is a European project that is being run by Volunteering Matters in Ipswich until March 2021. Although they are working predominantly with third-country nationals, all adults over the age of 18 are welcome to be involved. The EU VOICE project aims to foster “active participation of third country nationals in all aspects of community and societal life”. www.eu-voice.eu The core aim of the project is to enable, and support, third country nationals to complete a 25-day cultural volunteering experience in cultural institutions (libraries, museums, art galleries, heritage sites and cultural associations). Childcare costs and travel expenses will be covered by the project to reduce any barriers to families. For more information or to refer participants, please contact Volunteering Matters on e: sara.caravelas@volunteeringmatters.org.uk or sarah.bugg@volunteeringmatters.org.uk or t: 01473 418014.

Sea rescue NGOs: a pull factor of irregular migration? – Policy brief from European University Institute

The argument that maritime Search and Rescue (SAR) operations act as a ‘pull factor’ of irregular seaborne migration has become commonplace during the Mediterranean ‘refugee crisis’. This claim has frequently been used to criticize humanitarian non-governmental organizations (NGOs) conducting SAR off the coast of Libya, which are considered to provide “an incentive for human smugglers to arrange departures” (Italian Senate 2017: 9). In this policy brief, the researchers scrutinize this argument by examining migratory flows from Libya to Italy between 2014 and October 2019. They find no relationship between the presence of NGOs at sea and the number of migrants leaving Libyan shores. Although more data and further research are needed, the results of the analysis call into question the claim that non-governmental SAR operations are a pull factor of irregular migration across the Mediterranean Sea. Please follow this link to read the research paper in full: <https://cadmus.eui.eu/searescueNGOs>

Events

PARCA Integration Event - 17 January, Peterborough

This is PARCA’s first community event of 2020 and will take place at Unity Hall PE1 3QH from 5-7pm. Join them to celebrate together. Call to book a market place stand, a table to promote your organisation’s work to the local community. For more information, please contact PARCA on enquiries@parcald.org.

Belong: the cohesion and integration network presents living rooms – a series of linked webinars – February and March 2020

How we live together is becoming one of the defining challenges of the 21st century. This rolling series of three linked one-hour online seminars will explore a particular theme, from a range of different perspectives. It will examine how local leaders and places have developed innovative, creative approaches to some of the key challenges they face to increasing integration and cohesion locally. Standard and Advanced ‘Belong’ members can sign up for free, there will be a small fee charged per series for Associates and non-members.

Living Room 1: Communication for Integration

This first of three linked webinars will explore innovative ways that organisations and local areas can tailor messages to different audiences, work with the local media and deal with prejudice online. This seminar series will run in February – speakers, dates and sign up details will be announced in January.

Living Room 2: Integration through Education

In this series of three linked webinars we will hear from school leaders and those who work in partnership with schools on how they are tackling segregation. This seminar series will run in March – speakers, dates and sign up details will be announced in January.

To learn more about Belong, please follow this link to the [🌐 Belong Winter Newsletter 🌐](#) and sign up to their newsletter.

Language Exchange hub – Every Friday, Ipswich

Suffolk Refugee Support has started the language exchange hub for English speakers and non-English speakers. It is for non-English speakers to practice their English with others and for them to teach their language to English speakers. Participants have the chance to learn in a fun and informal environment. The group meets every Friday at the Wolsey Theatre from 10am to 12noon. Anyone who is interested please contact Yvonne on t: 01473 400785 or e: yhishaya@suffolkrefugee.org.uk

Funding

There are no funding updates in this edition

Jobs

There are no job updates in this edition

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