

The Newsflash is a bi-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.

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Asylum Seekers and Refugees – including refugee resettlement

Changes to Asylum & Resettlement policy and practice in response to Covid-19 - Refugee Council

The Refugee Council [website](#) provides a summary of the key temporary changes to asylum and resettlement policy and practice. This information is updated on a daily basis.

Phased resumption of substantive interviews

The Home Office has issued guidance on the planned process to resume substantive asylum interviews, mainly via video conferencing. In the initial phase those within close proximity of a United Kingdom Visas Immigration (UKVI) or Visa Facilitation Service (VFS) location will be asked to attend an asylum interview. The guidance is available [here](#).

Asylum Support - Resumption of cessations of support and evictions

Following a review of the pause on evictions, and a period of engagement with local authorities, the Home Office have confirmed that they will begin to resume cessations of support including evictions from asylum accommodation for people who have been granted status.

- People who have been granted status will begin to receive their 28 day move-on letters starting in England from 11 August. Letters will be sent out over a 6-week period, with each local authority having a slot in the 6-week period. Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland will follow a similar process but will start at a later date.
- The Home Office has provided local authorities with data on the people who will be issued letters in their area.
- People who would be eligible for priority housing under homelessness law will be housed by the local authority itself. Non-priority cases will receive advice and assistance to secure housing in the private rented sector. Whilst the local authority may not have duty to house non-priority cases, they have been provided with the details of each cases in advance to help them plan.
- Migrant Help and its move-on partners will keep in touch with people and assist them to claim benefits and let the Home Office know when they receive payments.
- The system of continuing asylum support payments until UC or other benefits have been paid will continue for now
- If Public Health advice is that a local lockdown results in people not being able to move, then that local authority will temporarily come off the list i.e. the LA will not be expected to house during that time.
- The above process will be closely monitored and kept under review.

On 15 September the Home Office announced that it will begin to recommence cessations of support for those who had their asylum claim refused by the Home Office. Details of the process will be posted [here](#) when they become available.

Wellbeing and Work for Refugee Integration - Project Update

The project is based on the principle that being economically active is the most significant step towards becoming integrated in UK society.

Among resettled refugees living for a year in the East of England, as of September 2018, only 4% were in employment, despite high levels of attendance in ESOL (English) classes.

While many refugees show an eagerness to work, unemployment levels remain high, in part because of the barriers they face in accessing a job. Specific challenges include: lack of UK work experience, lack of adequate language skills, lack of knowledge of work place culture to find, apply and interview for a job, challenges in recognising or translating their skills, qualifications and experience, or justifying gaps in CVs caused by the lack of right to work during the asylum process.

The latest project progress update can be found [here](#).

GCSE success for resettled refugee students

When they joined school in the UK, Amira and Fatima* both had gaps in their education history and little grasp of the English language. Four years later, Amira has achieved passes in 7 GCSE subjects, Fatima has passes in 4 subjects, and both are going on to study for their A Levels. Amira herself says 'When I came to [the school] I felt very welcome and everyone helped me with my English. I now have lots of friends at [school] and it has helped me to settle in to [the UK] and to school life. I really appreciate all the support I have had from all the organisations that have helped me and my family move [to the UK], including the [charity] that has sponsored us.' Of their resettlement, Fatima says 'Thankyou...for welcoming me and my family, I hope that I will return the faith that you have in me, when I go on to gaining a good career and give something back to the local community."

* names and details have been changed and/or removed to preserve anonymity.

Kent Intake Unit social worker guidance

This [document](#) provides guidance and information relevant to the delivery of social work assistance, by a team of contracted social workers, in support of the delivery of the Kent Intake Unit's (KIU's) functions in respect of children and those claiming to be children. This includes:

- guidance for the team of social workers on what their roles are, how these must be delivered and how they will operate alongside Home Office staff based in KIU
- guidance for Home Office members of staff working alongside the social workers

It is anticipated this will be a temporary arrangement to deal with the immediate pressures faced in the KIU.

Ending immigration detention of children and providing adequate care and reception for them - United Nations report of the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants

In this [report](#) on the human rights of migrants, Felipe González Morales examines the international legal framework that covers the human rights of migrant children. It shows the detrimental effects that immigration detention has on children and reviews existing alternative care and reception solutions. Furthermore, the Special Rapporteur analyses the information from, *inter alia*, States, civil society and national human rights institutions to identify good practices. The report concludes that, given the many existing good practices of States that provide adequate care and reception for migrant children, the immigration detention of children is effectively avoidable. The Special Rapporteur recommends that Member States shift their focus away from enforcement and coercion towards providing human rights-based alternative care and reception for all migrant children and their families.

Save the Children: New report on protection of migrant children's rights in Europe

With this [report](#), Save the Children aims to assess how children have been affected since the beginning of the so-called 'refugee crisis'. Looking at five key themes: protection at Europe's outer borders; immigration detention; access to asylum and residency; family reunification; and guardianship, the report aims to highlight key changes that affect children, rather than provide a comprehensive overview.

UNHCR online shop opens

Last year, UNHCR launched their very first Crowdfunder to support refugee artisans around the world and bring their beautifully handcrafted products to a shop near you. Lockdown brought a change of plans, and the online shop [MADE51](#) was opened. Every product is handmade by refugee collectives around the world and celebrates their unique and long-held artistic traditions. All profits from sales through this shop will be donated to UNHCR (a registered charity no 1183415 in England and Wales) in order to support UNHCR livelihoods programmes around the world. In celebration, UNHCR are offering a 10% discount on all online orders. Simply use the code WELCOME10 when you checkout.

New Home Office policy guidance on Changes to Dates of Birth

Published on 14 September 2020 this [guidance](#) sets out the Home Office policy on dates of birth and the circumstances in which they may be changed.

Asylum and resettlement datasets

The latest statistics on asylum and resettlement were published on 28 August 2020 and are available [here](#).

Returns and detention datasets

Immigration detention and returns data was updated on 27 August 2020 and can be found [here](#).

Migration

Coronavirus and the UK immigration system

The Free Movement [website](#) lists and regular updates with changes to UK immigration laws, rules and procedures brought on by the coronavirus pandemic.

Translated material - What is COVID-19 (coronavirus) and how can I stay safe? A guide for separated migrant children

Translated into 16 languages, this [guide](#) was produced by Migration Yorkshire. The new government rules which came into force on 22nd September have also been translated into [Arabic](#).

New Guidance - Coronavirus (COVID-19): Biometric enrolment, reuse and evidencing status

Because of COVID-19 measures, it is not possible to operate normal biometric enrolment services for most applicants. Some applicants have an urgent need to complete their applications to switch to a category of leave that allows them to work, access public funds or get free secondary NHS healthcare, where their current category does not, and some have no leave at all.

This [guidance](#) tells caseworkers the approach to handling application case types, made on or before 1 August 2020. It covers circumstances which cannot wait for a resumption to full capacity of biometric enrolment services, following the reduction of normal services at UK visa and citizenship application services (UKVCAS) and service support centres (SSC) in accordance with COVID-19 measures to protect the health and safety of staff and applicants.

EU Settlement Scheme statistics

The headline figures for the EU Settlement Scheme were updated on 31 August 2020 and indicate that the total number of applications received is now 3,910,100, with 3,711,500 applications concluded. These statistics now include paper applications received and processed since the opening of the scheme following the integration of data processed from two case working systems (for electronic and paper applications). This change also affects how cases transferred between the two systems are reported. These were previously shown as 'withdrawn or void' but have now been reconciled and are reported under their substantive outcome. Further details are available [here](#).

Best intentions: EU migrant workers in Fenland – report by The Social Market Foundation

This [report](#) by the Social Market Foundation looks at survey results to understand what this cohort of migrants really think about the UK's direction of travel on the EU and on immigration policy. How has this impacted their view of life in the UK and the choices they face over whether to stay or leave? And if they wish to stay, do they know what they need to do under the EU Settlement Scheme?

EU citizens' political rights in the UK - report by The3million and Eastern European Forum

This [report](#), published in August 2020 looks at barriers to political participation and recommendations for better representation of EU citizens in the UK.

Migrant Help EUSS services in Norfolk

Migrant Help EUSS services in Norfolk will be ending at the end of September 2020. Successor contracts have been awarded and details will appear in this Newsflash when the new providers are open for referrals.

Multimedia Toolkit for Roma Parents - Project Evaluation Report

Law for Life recently published an independent evaluation report about its project, which focused on Roma communities and child protection. This [report](#) highlights that the project made a significant contribution to building capacity within Roma communities to engage more knowledgeably and confidently in child protection investigations. The report also lists a number of recommendations for key stakeholders.

A review of what works in multi-agency decision making and the implications for child victims of trafficking - by IASC and ECPAT UK

On 12 August 2020, the Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner, Dame Sara Thornton, launched a [review](#) produced in partnership with ECPAT UK, examining what works in existing multi-agency decision making frameworks to help inform future thinking on potential pilots for devolved National Referral Mechanism (NRM) decision making for child victims of trafficking.

This review identifies a number of best practice models currently used in multi-agency decision making frameworks for safeguarding adults and children. Recommendations for UK government and for local safeguarding partners considering pilots for local NRM decision making call for:

- a devolved NRM decision making model that is intrinsically linked to local safeguarding structures;
- sufficient funding for local safeguarding partnerships to meet the demands of contextual safeguarding interventions for children and young people who have been trafficked and exploited within their overall safeguarding duties as well as funding for any additional resource required to make NRM decisions locally;
- all decisions to be made to attain the best interests of the child, also facilitating the voice of the child by ensuring that the wishes and feelings of children are understood and are taken into account.

Modern Slavery - National Referral Mechanism statistics Quarter 2, 2020

Published on 17 September, the statistics for the second quarter of the year show a 23% decrease in referrals against the first quarter of 2020. For the first time, more referrals were received for child potential victims than adults. Just over a third (843) of the NRM referrals were for potential victims who claimed exploitation as adults, whilst 58% (1,274) claimed exploitation as children. The complete document is available [here](#).

Modern Slavery - Government's response to the transparency in supply chains consultation

In response to the consultation, the government is introducing new measures to strengthen the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and ensure that large businesses and public bodies tackle modern slavery risks in supply chains.

Organisations with a budget of £36 million or more in all sectors will be required to publish their modern slavery statements on a new digital government reporting service, and the government has committed to mandating the key topics that modern slavery statements must cover, from due diligence to risk assessment, to encourage organisations to be transparent about the work they are doing to ensure responsible practices. Click [here](#) for the announcement and [here](#) for the full document .

Understanding Community Resilience in Our Towns – Report by HOPE not hate

This [report](#) aims to take a 'place-based' approach, so as to better understand how to build cohesive communities across Britain's towns. It looks at 14 factors which could create particular challenges for towns, undermining resilience and increasing hostility to immigration.

Ex-Gratia Scheme for Afghan interpreters to be expanded

The Government announced on 19 September 2020 that the scheme would be expanded to allow an additional cohort of interpreters – those who resigned on or after 01 May 2006 after serving a minimum of 18 months on the frontline – to apply for relocation. Their spouses and children will also benefit from the expanded scheme. The press release is available [here](#).

Recruiting people from outside the UK from 1 January 2021

From 1 January 2021 the rules for recruiting anyone from outside the UK will change and employers will need to have a sponsor licence to hire most workers from outside the UK. New guidance has been published and is available [here](#).

Policy and legislative changes affecting migration to the UK: timeline

This [guidance](#) contains details of policy changes, together with information on changes to immigration legislation that affect immigration statistics.

OISC exams move online

The Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner (OISC) has announced that its exams are going online for at least the next six months. People hoping to become OISC-regulated immigration advisers will sit their exams remotely until the end of March 2021. The OISC introduced online competence assessments from 14 September 2020. OISC online competence assessments dates are available [here](#).

Immigration statistics, year ending June 2020

Published on 27 August 2020, this immigration statistics [release](#) provides information relating to those coming to the UK, extending their stay, gaining citizenship, applying for asylum, and being detained or removed, as well as immigration for work, study and family reasons.

Migration research and analysis - collection

This [collection](#) brings together all documents relating to migration research, analysis and statistics, including reports produced by the European Migration Network (EMN) to support Home Office policy development and operational activity.

New Transparency data

A new collection was published on 27 August 2020 providing [data](#) on Immigration & Protection activities including:

- appeal representation rate
- percentage of asylum operations applications processed within 6 months
- asylum operations work in progress
- destitution change of conditions applications and outcomes (previously published separately)
- Right to Work status checks

Migration transparency data

The latest update to this [data](#) on Border Force, UK Visas and Immigration, Immigration Enforcement and Her Majesty's Passport Office performance includes updated [data](#) on claims and payments made under the Windrush Compensation Scheme for September 2020.

Events and Training

Well-being and Work for Refugee Integration - Project Launch Event

Funding for this project was awarded in April 2020 and the project team at the East of England Strategic Migration Partnership has been working with project partners to recruit to the 20 roles that the scheme has created as well as award some of the work to subcontractors.

We now have well-being therapists in place across the region where Refugee Council is delivering the service, dedicated refugee employment advisers and skills assessors in every county and English language (ESOL specialist) tutors ready to deliver online English with Employment Skills classes to help our refugees enter the UK job market. On top of that, we have a region-wide employer liaison service to link people into work placement roles and a mentoring programme with MENTA to encourage entrepreneurial refugees to run their own businesses.

We are marking this milestone with an online launch event on **21 October 2020 - 11.30-13.30** for agencies across the region to attend and meet the providers to find out what is on offer and how to access these services. The project is time-limited and will finish in December 2022, so we want to make sure that everyone who needs to access it knows about it.

The event will give delegates the opportunity to:

- hear from our project partners and subcontractors about the services they are providing
- hear from us about which third country nationals, refugees and UASC are eligible for the services
- find out how to access services and make referrals
- find out how to offer employment opportunities through the scheme
- learn more generally about the project's scope and vision

To register for this exciting and innovative launch, please click [here](#)

For further information and queries, please contact Louise Gooch, Project Lead louise.gooch@eelga.gov.uk

Resettled Refugee Families Mental Health Support - Yorkshire and Humber Conference

Hosted by Migration Yorkshire, SOLACE and Refugee Council, learn about the impact of their Children and Families Wellbeing Project. Join a Skills Share session on **21 October 2020 - 10.15-12.45** hosted by family therapists who will share practitioners' challenges and successes and give you an understanding of why and how they work with families who are new to the UK through the UNHCR resettlement programmes.

The event is free. Places are limited, so early booking is encouraged. Sign up [here](#).

PATH training - Planning hopeful paths for refugee families & individuals

Citizens UK and Sponsor Refugees are running Planning Alternative Tomorrows with Hope (PATH) training in collaboration with Educational Psychologists, Tim Cox and Helen Owen-Hughes. PATH is designed to empower groups, institutions and citizens to plan for the future through active listening and a people-centred mindset.

The training helps to:

- Envision a meaningful and positive future
- Set coherent, achievable, and incremental goals which help to orient your life and project over the course of a year
- Facilitate active listening and foster a sense of common purpose within your community
- Recruit allies and strengthen your collective efficacy
- Identify challenges which may inhibit your progress and think about how to stay resilient in the face of them
- PATH is a great way to increase participation, collective decision making and agency for individuals, groups and institutions.

This training is recommended for Community Sponsorship Volunteers, Refugee Welcome groups, Refugee Support Workers, Local Authority Support Officers and starts on **27 October 2020 - 18:00-19:30**

For further information and to sign up, click [here](#)

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Free online course about Roma communities

The aim of the course is to increase awareness of Roma communities in Europe. The sessions will offer an insight into the Roma culture, history and language and will run **every Tuesday 15 September 2020 to 26 January 2020 - 17:00-18:00** and is free of charge

The link for the Zoom call is [here](#), and the password is **compas**

Webinar about the impact of Covid-19 on BAME communities in Hertfordshire

A webinar exploring the impacts of coronavirus on BAME communities in Hertfordshire will take place for residents and organisations across the county on **Friday 9 October - 17:00-18:30**.

The webinar, which is being put on by Hertfordshire County Council in collaboration with the Hertfordshire Black and Asian Minority Ethnic (BAME) Network and the county's Community Reassurance Cell (CRC) of Hertfordshire's Local Resilience Forum, will be led by Professor Jim McManus, Director of Public Health at Hertfordshire County Council and will feature members of the BAME Network. The webinar will be introduced by Cllr Linda Haysey, chair of the CRC and leader of East Herts Council. The CRC carried out a survey which called for community leaders, groups and other representatives to share how they had been impacted by coronavirus. The findings showed that further support for BAME communities is needed in Hertfordshire.

Public Health England (PHE) also published a report earlier this year on the impact coronavirus is having on the BAME community and the findings of this report will be discussed at the webinar. There will be an opportunity to answer your questions. To register and send your questions in advance, please email:

equalities@hertfordshire.gov.uk

Conference - Improving Mental Health Support for Asylum Seekers and Refugees

Chaired by Amanda Salomonsson, Project Officer, UK Lead for Mental Health & Psychotherapist at The International Organization for Migration United Kingdom, this national conference on **5 October 2020** will provide you with practical guidance for improving Mental Health Support for Asylum Seekers and Refugees. You will have the opportunity to network with colleagues who are working to improve mental health support for refugees and asylum seekers, self-assess and reflect on your own practice and gain CPD accreditation points contributing to professional development and revalidation evidence.

You will have a valuable opportunity to hear from Gulwali Passarlay, Author, The Lightless Sky who will share learning from his experience as a young refugee fleeing the conflict in Afghanistan.

For the full programme content, speaker line-up and to book click [here](#)

Reduced rate of only £295 + VAT for virtual attendance

Funding

There are no funding updates in this edition

Jobs

Chatterbox - Language Coaches

Chatterbox are recruiting language coaches for their language learning service delivered by refugees and are seeking refugees to join their community.

What they are looking for:

- Refugee or asylum seeker (with the right to work)
- Native Spanish, Arabic or French speaker
- A good level of spoken English
- Educated to degree level or with teaching experience
- A desire to teach your native language

Further information and details of how to apply are available [here](#)

New Routes Integration, Norwich - General Manager/CEO

New Routes Integration has been providing services to refugees and asylum seeker in the Norwich area for over 15 years and has steadily grown in terms of size of the organisation and the number of clients that we provide services for.

Due to continued expansion we are currently looking to appoint a General Manager/CEO to manage our team and report to the Board of Directors. The appointment is 0.6FTE (22.5 hours), initially for a fixed term contract of one year, with the hope of extension. We are offering a competitive salary of up to £21,000 per annum (£35K pro rata). Further details and the application form can be found [here](#).

If you would like to talk to someone about the role, please contact trustees@newroutes.org in the first instance.

Deadline for applications: **Sunday 4 October, 5pm**.

Proposed interview dates: Interviews will be ongoing until a suitable candidate is appointed.

Commencement date: October/November 2020.

New Routes Integration, Norwich - Trustees

New Routes Integration are looking for trustees to join and help it to move into the next phase of growth from a small to a medium sized charity. They are particularly interested in candidates who have one or more of:

- lived experience as a refugee/asylum seeker/first or second-generation immigrant
- fundraising knowledge
- significant safeguarding expertise
- links to the Norwich business sector, third sector or public sector
- legal expertise
- experience as a trustee of a charity

Further details and the trustee role description can be found [here](#).

Please contact trustees@newroutes.org.uk to arrange a meeting with the Chair in the first instance, who will give you an overview of the organisation. There will then be an application form and interview process.

Applications open for Care Leavers Internship Scheme 2020

Young people leaving care will again be directly offered the opportunity to work at central government departments, as applications are open for this year's Care Leaver Internship Scheme. More than 500 internship opportunities for care leavers will be available at the heart of Government, including at the Department for Education and Department for Work and Pensions, among almost 20 departments and agencies.

The 12-month paid internships are aimed at helping care leavers to develop skills and competences that support them into long-term jobs. **Applications will be open from Monday 7 September to Monday 5 October.**

The scheme aims to address statistics that show that care leavers are more than three times more likely than their peers not to be in education, employment or training (NEET).

Further information is available [here](#).

Applications are open to UK, Commonwealth and European Economic Area (EEA) and certain non-EEA nationals. Further information on who is eligible to apply is available [here](#).

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