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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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## EVENTS AND TRAINING

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- [Making a difference for our children in care and care leavers - Looked after Children and Care Leavers week: 6-10 December 2021](#)
- [Introduction to social services support for people with no recourse to public funds – Thursday 9 December 2021 – 11:00-13:00](#)
- [International Child Protection & Kinship Care training – 26 and 27 January 2022 – Online](#)
- [Investing in Integration: How to Support Diverse and Inclusive Communities – Wednesday 15 December 2021 – 14:00-15:30](#)
- [Every Child Protected Against Trafficking \(ECPAT UK\) training – various dates](#)
- [The Supporting Refugees and Asylum Seekers Conference 2022: Improving Outcomes Through Partnership Working – Tuesday 8 February 2022 09:00-17:00](#)

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## FUNDING

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- [The Allen Lane Foundation](#)

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## JOBS

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- [General Assistant – People from Abroad Team, Norfolk County Council](#)
- [Pashto and Dari sessional interpreter – Yorkshire Humber & Hertfordshire – The Refugee Council](#)

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## Asylum Seekers and Refugees – including refugee resettlement

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### **Afghan refugees in the UK – Commentary by The Migration Observatory**

After the withdrawal from Afghanistan of British and US armed forces and the Taliban's ascent to power in the summer of 2021, the number of forcibly displaced Afghans rose steeply. The UN estimates that from 1 January to 20 October 2021, 677,000 people were newly displaced inside Afghanistan.

These added to millions already displaced before 2021. As of 13 July of this year, of Afghanistan's population of around 40 million, 3.5 million were internally displaced (most before 2021). A further 2.6 million Afghan refugees are registered with UNHCR (the United Nations refugee agency) around the world outside Afghanistan, of which an estimated 2.2 million are in Iran and Pakistan. Most of these were displaced before 2021, and their numbers will likely continue to grow.

In response to this crisis, the UK government announced programmes to resettle Afghan refugees in the UK. Other Afghan refugees are likely to reach the UK of their own accord in the coming years and claim asylum. This [commentary](#) answers five frequently asked questions about Afghan refugees in the UK:

- How many Afghans have been relocated or resettled to the UK so far, and how many will come in the next few years?
- How many Afghans are likely to claim asylum in the UK in the coming years?
- How many Afghans already claim asylum in the UK?
- Where will Afghan refugees live in the UK?
- How many refugees should the UK resettle and what can local authorities cope with?

### **Afghanistan Country of Origin Information (COI) Repository**

Developed jointly by Asylos, ARC Foundation and Clifford Chance, this repository contains a list of national, regional and international sources and presents relevant and current country information on Afghanistan under research headings. This initiative is an emergency response to the crisis in Afghanistan and will be updated on a weekly basis - every Thursday - until further notice.

The COI Repository is intended as background reference material for legal representatives and those assisting asylum seekers from Afghanistan, to assist in their preparation of the case. The COI Repository should be used as a tool to help identify relevant COI.

For more information and to download the latest report, click [here](#)

### **How to support Afghan Students in Schools – Schools of Sanctuary**

On Wednesday 3rd November the Schools of Sanctuary Team at City of Sanctuary UK held a webinar in partnership with Refugee Education UK to help schools meet the needs of newly arrived Afghan students that arrive in their community. This event brought together around 120 participants from across the UK with many others asking for details of the recording and PowerPoint. This level of interest exemplifies how schools are committed to proactively welcoming students from sanctuary-seeking backgrounds and preparing for their arrival in order to best support them in school and with their transitions to life in the UK.

In the event, Catherine Gladwell, Chief Executive at Refugee Education UK, drew from recent research on the displacement of young Afghans to explain the educational implications for students with a focus on barriers to their progress and achievement. She then outlined practical strategies schools/teachers can adopt to overcome these challenges and shared details of their existing and latest resources that can help schools engage with Afghan families and develop their policies and practices.

A recording of this webinar on how to help schools meet the needs of Afghan students from sanctuary-seeking backgrounds is now available [here](#), along with other vital resources for teachers and school staff.

## **The educational outcomes of refugee and asylum-seeking children in England – Education Policy Institute Report**

New research from the Education Policy Institute (EPI), supported by Unbound Philanthropy, finds that asylum-seeking children who enter the UK separated from their parents are on average over three years behind non-migrant children at school by the time they take their GCSEs. The new EPI [working paper](#), which is the first study to examine the educational outcomes of the majority of asylum-seeking and refugee pupils in England, estimates their school attainment and considers absence and exclusion rates.

To date, little has been known about the outcomes of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, resettled refugees or asylum support children who enter the English school system, as the government does not record the progress of these pupils. To estimate the educational outcomes of this highly vulnerable pupil group, many of whom have experienced acute trauma, researchers at EPI developed a methodology that combines administrative datasets with national statistics and data obtained through freedom of information requests to the Home Office.

The considerable gap in attainment between unaccompanied asylum-seeking pupils and non-migrant children of 37.4 months is estimated by researchers to be similar in size to the gap for pupils with special needs and disabilities who have the most severe needs. The new report also reveals that unaccompanied asylum-seeking children experience higher rates of fixed period school exclusions (7.1%) than non-migrant children (5.2%), as well as slightly higher school absence rates of 6.8% compared to 6.6% for non-migrant children.

In contrast to unaccompanied children, resettled refugee children and asylum-seeking children living with family members in receipt of financial support from the government, are estimated to experience a much smaller school attainment gap on average, but one that is still substantial – trailing their non-migrant peers by around a year and a half (17.3 months) at GCSE.

Resettled refugee and asylum support recipient children are however estimated to have higher school attendance rates than non-migrant children, with 5% school absence rates compared to the 6.6% for non-migrant children. Such pupils also have a lower-than-average fixed period exclusion rate, at 4.4% compared to the non-migrant average of 5.2%.

## **National Transfer Scheme to become mandatory for all local authorities – Home Office press release**

On Tuesday 23 November, the Minister for Safe and Legal Migration, Kevin Foster, wrote to all local authorities with children's services across the UK to inform them of the government's intention to temporarily mandate the National Transfer Scheme. Under this change all local authorities have been given legal notice to accept transfers of children into their care, providing placements to unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC).

The decision to mandate the scheme is vital to ensure unaccompanied asylum-seeking children receive the critical care they need and end the use of hotels for them following the unprecedented recent pressure placed on the asylum system.

Whilst many local authorities have been providing support under the voluntary scheme announced in the summer, this is a national issue that requires all local authorities play their part. Therefore, urgent steps must be taken to ensure immediate, fuller participation that is fair for all local authorities with children's services across all parts of the country.

For the full announcement, click [here](#)

## **Opportunity for LGBTQ people seeking sanctuary to be matched with mentors from leading companies**

The Tent Partnership for Refugees, Stonewall, and Micro Rainbow are working together to encourage the business community to support LGBTQ+ people from sanctuary-seeking backgrounds based in the UK. They've mobilized 20 large companies to commit to mentoring over 600 LGBTQ+ people over the next three years. If your organization is interested in referring people, please reach out Desmond Yeo at [desmond@tent.org](mailto:desmond@tent.org). Find out more [here](#)

## **An analysis of Channel crossings and asylum outcomes – Refugee Council report**

The issue of people crossing the Channel in small boats has received increased media and political attention over recent years. Whilst there has undoubtedly been an increase in the number of people crossing the English Channel to seek asylum, the overall number of people claiming asylum in the UK has actually decreased. The latest official statistics show that in the year ending June 2021, 37,235 people applied for asylum in the UK, a 4% decrease on the previous year. The increase in the number of people using small boats to enter the UK represents a change in one of the methods people are using to enter the UK to seek asylum, rather than an increase in the actual number of people claiming asylum. Historically a greater proportion of people seeking asylum would have entered the UK irregularly through freight transit routes, which have become more difficult to access over recent years, primarily because of increased security measures at the freight terminals around Calais.

This [report](#) sets out what is known about who is coming across the Channel in small boats, examining the likely outcome of any asylum claim from people arriving via the Channel, using published data from the government's official quarterly immigration statistics along with data obtained from Freedom of Information (FOI) requests for the period January 2020 to May/June 2021.

## **Forced migration and sexual and gender-based violence: findings from the SEREDA project in the UK**

Over the past three years, the Sexual and Gender Based Violence against Refugees from Displacement to Arrival ([SEREDA](#)) research team led by the University of Birmingham's Professor Jenny Phillimore, has conducted extensive research to understand the nature and incidence of SGBV experienced by refugees who have fled conflict to seek safety in the UK.

The research outlined how forced migrants faced different kinds of violence at different stages of their journey. Many respondents experienced SGBV at all these stages, including restriction of movement, physical and verbal abuse, humiliation, torture, starvation, human organ trafficking and slavery, sexual violence, labour exploitation, blackmailing, being thrown into the sea (or threat of), deprivation of possessions including medicines and official papers, or being abandoned.

The report found that once in the UK, many SGBV survivors continued to experience violence and/or were placed at risk of further abuse or trauma by immigration and asylum policies. The full report is available [here](#), and the executive summary is [here](#)

## **Highest number of asylum applications since 2003 – Free Movement**

Over 17,000 people applied for asylum in the UK between July and September, the highest quarterly total since 2003, new Home Office figures show. Year on year, there has been an 11% rise in applications to 44,000 in the 12 months to the end of September 2021. This includes dependants in both cases.

The rise has been driven by sharp increases in applications from Eritreans (up 97%), Syrians (74%), Vietnamese (44%), Iranians, Albanians and Afghans (all 39%). Almost 1,100 Afghan nationals applied for asylum in the third quarter of 2021.

Two thirds of people who apply for asylum are now getting it at the first time of asking.

The asylum backlog continues to rise. 56,500 people were waiting more than six months for an initial decision on their case at the end of September.

The immigration inspector recently reported that adults who received an asylum decision in 2020 had been waiting an average of 449 days (15 months). For unaccompanied children, it was 550 days (18 months).

Click [here](#) for more information from Free Movement. For a series a graphs summarising key trends in the UK asylum system, click [here](#)

## **Immigration Rules - Appendix Settlement Protection: indefinite leave to remain for refugees – Free Movement**

The [Appendix Settlement Protection](#) to the Immigration Rules came into force on 6 October 2021. As the name might suggest, it consolidates the rules on settlement for people who have been in the UK on a protection route (i.e. refugee status or humanitarian protection) for five years. It also applies to partners and children of the person with protection if they were granted permission as a dependent at any time. A successful application under Appendix Settlement Protection results in permission to stay in the UK indefinitely.

More information including validity, suitability and eligibility requirements is available [here](#).

## **“It’s like rubbing salt on the wound”: the impacts of Covid-19 and lockdown on asylum seekers and refugees - Newcastle University and the Economic and Social Research Council report**

This [research](#) draws upon a UK-wide survey of service providers working with or for refugees, as well as interviews with service providers, refugees and asylum seekers in Glasgow and Newcastle-Gateshead.

For asylum seekers and refugees, the impacts of the Covid-19 crisis overlap with a range of challenges and inequalities that pre-dated the pandemic. These pre-existing hardships and the challenges presented by the pandemic, combined to leave many highly vulnerable in this time of crisis. As indicated in the report title, Amma, an asylum seeker in Newcastle-Gateshead, said ‘It was difficult before Covid. With Covid, it’s like rubbing salt on the wound.’ Many of the refugees and asylum seekers spoken to felt that their lives were already in a state of lockdown as they were restricted in many domains of life including housing, education, finance, and employment. These pre-existing hardships and the challenges presented by the pandemic, combined to leave many highly vulnerable in this time of crisis.

## **‘How will we survive?’ steps to preventing destitution in the asylum system - British Red Cross and the Refugee Survival Trust report**

Destitution is a major problem faced by people in the UK asylum system. Coming from different cultures and backgrounds, some not speaking English, newly arrived people seeking asylum face many difficulties as they settle in the UK. But making the limited support stretch to meet their basic everyday needs – without being pulled into destitution – is often the biggest challenge. The main aim of this [research](#) is to explore what steps need to be taken so that destitution can be prevented among people seeking asylum in the UK, with a particular focus on Scotland. The report calls on the Home Office to:

- establish the right to work for people waiting for a decision on their asylum claim
- provide an initial cash grant to people entering the asylum support system so they have start-up support to purchase clothing, phones and other essential items
- improve and speed up asylum decision-making so people aren’t stuck in limbo facing destitution as they wait for months, and even years, for a decision

## **An inspection of asylum casework (August 2020 – May 2021) - Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration report**

Published on 18 November 2021, this [report](#) looked at the asylum casework system, from an application being raised via screening interview up to the service of an initial decision. It focused on:

- resourcing, training, workflow, and the prioritisation of claims in the absence of a formal service standard
- the quality of substantive interviews, including the use of Video Conferencing (VC), which increased throughout 2020, in part due to the pandemic
- the quality of decision making
- quality assurance and feedback to decision makers (DMs)
- progress in implementing recommendations from the 2017 ICIBI inspection report on asylum intake and casework

Of the 9 recommendations in the report, the Home Office accepted 8 recommendations, and partially accepted one. See the Home Office response [here](#)



## Migration

### Immigration statistics, year ending September 2021

The quarterly and annual [statistics](#) for the year ending September 2021 have been released. They relate to individuals 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, including new visa routes where these are operational.

How many people come to the UK each year (including visitors)? - There were an estimated 21 million passenger arrivals in the year ending September 2021 (including returning UK residents), a 69% (46.3 million) decrease compared with the previous year. This was due to the travel restrictions imposed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

There were 1,115,155 visas granted in the year ending September 2021, 19% fewer than the previous year and 64% fewer than the year before as a result of the global pandemic. Of the visas granted in this last 12 months, 39% were for study, 23% were to visit, 18% were to work, 4% were for family, and 15% for other reasons.

There were 24,000 applications for the BN(O) route in Q3 of 2021, with 21,037 out of country applications, and 2,900 in country applications. There have been a total of 88,800 applications for the BN(O) route since its introduction on 31st January up to 30th September 2021.

Settlement - There were 115,361 decisions on applications for settlement in the UK in the year ending September 2021, a 43% increase on the previous year and 27% more than the year ending September 2019. Of these, 113,486 (98%) resulted in a grant.

EEA nationals and their family members - Documents issued under European law are no longer valid as evidence of a right of residence in the UK unless an application to the EUSS was made on or before 30 June 2021. Applications received before 1 January 2021 are still being processed. More information is available on the relevant [visas and immigration pages on GOV.UK](#).

In the year ending September 2021, there were a total of 19,843 decisions in applications for EEA residence documents, 62% fewer than the previous 12 months. This included 6,363 registration certificates and registration cards issued, and 3,772 documents certifying permanent residence and permanent residence cards issued.

The Home Office publishes updates to headline [EU Settlement Scheme numbers](#) on a monthly basis, with more detailed statistical reports published quarterly. The latest data show that 6.3 million applications to the EU Settlement Scheme had been received up to 31 October 2021.

### Government to open new immigration removal centre

It was [announced](#) on 23 November that a new immigration removal centre will replace Yarl's Wood as the only dedicated immigration removal centre for women.

Tom Pursglove MP, the Minister for Justice and Tackling Illegal Migration, announced the opening of Derwentside immigration removal centre for women in County Durham. Derwentside will provide safe, secure and fit for purpose accommodation for women. The population will include both time-served foreign national offenders and immigration offenders.

The new centre is anticipated to create approximately 200 permanent jobs in the local area when the centre is fully operational by the end of the year. Mitie Care & Custody Ltd has been appointed to manage Derwentside immigration removal centre, with a 2-year contract that was signed on 4 June 2021.

The new contract takes into account Stephen Shaw's 2 reviews of vulnerability in detention, with increased staffing levels, a higher ratio of female custody officers and a range of dedicated welfare services.

## The Nationality and Borders Bill

The Nationality and Borders Bill was published on 6 July 2021. The Bill would implement many of the measures outlined in the Government's [New Plan for Immigration policy statement](#) (published March 2021). The New Plan was open to public consultation for six weeks.

The Bill is currently at the Report stage which gives MPs an opportunity, on the floor of the House, to consider further amendments (proposals for change) to a Bill which has been examined in committee. All MPs may speak and vote - for lengthy or complex Bills the debates may be spread over several days. All MPs can suggest amendments to the Bill or new clauses (parts) they think should be added. The Report stage is usually followed immediately by debate on the Bill's third reading.

The three main objectives of the Bill, and the underlying policy statement, are:

- To increase the fairness of the system to better protect and support those in need of asylum
- To deter illegal entry into the United Kingdom, thereby breaking the business model of people smuggling networks and protecting the lives of those they endanger
- To remove those with no right to be in the UK more easily

Nationality - Various historical anomalies and areas of unfairness in British nationality law would be removed. An additional requirement for citizenship applications made on behalf of stateless children born in the UK would be introduced.

Asylum, irregular migration and enforcement - Irregular journeys to the UK and late claims for asylum would be deterred and penalised in various ways. Irregular entrants would have restricted access to the UK asylum system and could be granted inferior immigration rights if allowed to stay. The Bill also allows for off-shore processing of asylum claims and codifies the UK's interpretation of key concepts in the 1951 Refugee Convention.

The Bill introduces new ways to deter claims without merit and late claims. These include a new "priority removal" process, which would include some new eligibility for publicly funded legal advice, and a new fast-track appeal process for detained cases.

The Bill would broaden criminal sanctions for offences related to illegal entry and facilitation of unlawful immigration and increase the associated maximum penalties. It would also give border and immigration staff additional powers to stop and redirect vessels out of UK territorial seas, subject to the UK's international legal responsibilities.

Trafficking and modern slavery - Some measures are intended to support the early identification of potential victims of trafficking or modern slavery and protect the system from misuse by people who make unfounded claims.

These include the introduction of slavery or trafficking notices, changes to the reasonable grounds threshold, and a new "public order" threshold for denying protection to potential trafficking and slavery victims who have committed a crime or acted in "bad faith."

The Bill also creates a statutory obligation to grant limited leave to remain to recognised victims of trafficking or modern slavery in certain circumstances.

Some of the overarching themes in published responses to the Bill are:

- That the Government's proposals will establish a 'two-tier' protection system, which unfairly distinguishes between refugees depending on their mode of arrival to the UK.
- Doubts about whether proposals are novel, workable, and/or likely to achieve their stated objectives.
- Concerns that proposals are contrary to established caselaw and international refugee law, and/or may be vulnerable to legal challenges.
- Critiques that the measures outlined in the Plan (and Bill) overlook other aspects of the asylum system in need of reform and more effective ways to improve the efficiency of the asylum system.

Read more in this [Commons Library Research Briefing](#).

The Bill as introduced, and the current version of the Bill as amended in Public Bill Committee are available [here](#)



## Visa penalties and new powers to speed up removal of illegal migrants

The Home Secretary will be granted new powers that will incentivise other countries to cooperate with the removal of those who have no right to be in the UK. Under these new powers, the Home Secretary will also be able to take a tougher stance on countries who do not cooperate with deportations and removals, by suspending visas entirely, imposing a £190 surcharge on applications to come to the UK, or increasing visa processing times. This new power to impose visa penalties is one of the tabled amendments to the Nationality and Borders Bill. More foreign criminals will also be removed sooner. Under changes to the Early Removal Scheme, foreign national criminals will now be eligible for removal up to 12 months before the end of their custodial sentence, as opposed to 9 months.

The Minister for Justice and Tackling Illegal Migration, Tom Pursglove said:

“The New Plan for Immigration provides the only long-term solution to fix our broken asylum system, and we are taking another step forward in delivering on this commitment as our Nationality and Borders Bill continues its passage through Parliament”.

For more on this, keep reading [here](#)

## NRPF Network human rights assessment template and practice guidance

NRPF Network have published a new human rights assessment [template](#) and accompanying [practice guidance](#) to assist councils with the process of undertaking a human rights assessment when Schedule 3 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 applies to an adult with care needs, family, or care leaver (age 18+) who is receiving or applying for social services' support.

When a person is 'in breach of immigration laws', Schedule 3 requires the Council to undertake a human rights assessment to determine whether the person is able to return to their country of origin to avoid destitution in the UK. When the person can reasonably be expected to return, social services' support can be withheld or withdrawn. If a barrier preventing return is identified, the Council can provide support.

Click [here](#) for more information

## Further funding for organisations supporting people applying for EU Settlement Scheme

The Home Office has [announced](#) a further £3 million funding to help vulnerable and at-risk EU citizens apply to the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS). The money will go to the network of grant funded organisations supporting people with their EUSS applications across the UK, who have vulnerabilities such as language barriers or limited access to IT.

Having helped more than 360,000 individuals with applications to the scheme so far, this funding boost means the Home Office has now made £25 million in funding available for this network of 72 organisations, since 2019. This will continue until at least 31 March 2022, ensuring that provision remains in place for eligible EU citizens who have reasonable grounds for missing the 30 June 2021 deadline to access the support they need to make a late application.

This is building on the wide range of support already available to EU citizens applying to the EUSS. This support includes more than 1,500 Home Office staff working on EUSS, 250 Settlement Resolution Centre staff in place providing assistance to applicants who have questions about the scheme, and the assisted digital locations across the UK that support individuals with their online applications. In total, the Home Office received more than 6.2 million applications to the EUSS by 30 September 2021, with 172,200 received since the 30 June 2021 deadline.

The grant funded network supported by the Home Office includes charities, local authorities and community groups across the UK.



## Supreme Court overturns expansion of benefits rights for EU citizens

The Supreme Court has overturned last year's ruling that EU citizens with pre-settled status should be able to claim Universal Credit without having to jump through hoops. The case is [Fratila and another v Secretary of State for Work and Pensions \[2021\] UKSC 53](#). Pre-settled status allows EU citizens living in the UK before Brexit took effect to stay here legally. It lasts for five years, after which people can upgrade to full settled status. The conditions for getting pre-settled status were not particularly onerous: residence, even for a short period, was the main thing.

But when it comes to claiming benefits, the government brought in regulations saying that pre-settled status was not enough to satisfy the residence condition for Universal Credit. People with pre-settled status can still claim Universal Credit but have to prove that they have a stronger "right to reside" than pre-settled status alone — such as being a "worker" under EU law.

To read more on this, click [here](#)

## Informal Survey for Kinship Care Organisations on their Support for Ethnic Minority Communities

Within the UK, there is a long-standing record of ethnic minority communities not being able to equally access social service support. This is particularly true for carers – individuals who look after a child who is not their own (but who may be related to them). However, planners and providers of social care services have a legal duty to offer services that are accessible and appropriate to all sectors of the community, irrespective of ethnic origin. This survey was designed to understand the support offered by kinship organisations and the challenges they face when providing services to different ethnic minority communities.

The survey was primarily distributed through the Kinship Care Alliance, a group of 27 organisations focused on family and friends care, and half a dozen other kinship-related organisations. As there is existing research on racism in foster care services, this survey explicitly excluded provision of foster care – so it had a lower target base of charities. The survey was anonymous, so it was not possible to tell if an organisation filled in the survey more than once – however, any responses from the same IP address were filtered out.

### Summary of findings

The survey found that 80% of kinship care organisations reported that their service users included those from ethnic minority backgrounds, but only 40% targeted the promotion of their services to attract clients from ethnic minority communities. This contrasts with 80% who tailored the delivery of their services to better meet the needs of ethnic minority groups – although 100% said this would be important to do. When asked why services or communications were not tailored, respondents said that it was too costly, the ethnic minority community served was too small or that other needs have taken priority.

Overall, there was a real range of competency even amongst those organisations which said they tailored their services for ethnic minority communities. On one end, there was one organisation which claimed to provide materials in a 'variety of languages' – but when we checked their website, we could not find any resources in a language other than English. Some organisation's tailoring of services included provision of materials in Welsh as well as English or using the word 'celebration' instead of Christmas/Easter. Other organisations were more targeted in their tailoring, for example providing ingredients and recipes from specific cultures/countries. One organisation said it didn't tailor its services for ethnic minorities because those 'families don't come forward for support', which might be linked to the lack of targeted promotion of services.

To access the qualitative results of this survey in full, click [here](#)

## **New Statement of Changes to the Immigration Rules: HC 803 (Pork Butchers)**

The latest statement of changes to the Immigration Rules ([HC 803](#)), which came into force on 1 November 2021, allows pork butchers to come to the UK as Seasonal Workers for up to 6 months. This is one of the various measures the government introduced to support the pig industry. These Seasonal Workers must be paid the same minimum salary as any Skilled Worker, and no less. The main advantage to employers who recruit under this scheme is the relative flexibility it creates. For example, employers who want to hire Seasonal Workers do not need to get a sponsor licence; instead, they must recruit through one of four agencies. Seasonal Workers also don't need to speak any English or pay the Immigration Health Surcharge.

These visas are only available for people doing "specified pork butchery work". This means:

- Working in occupation code 5431 (butcher), and
- What they are butchering is pigs, and
- The place of work is a farm, slaughterhouse or "processing site".

Foreign butchers meeting these requirements can apply up to 31 December 2021 and can be granted permission to be in the UK lasting no more than 6 months.

Click [here](#) for more information

## **Which parts of the UK are attracting the most Skilled Workers from overseas? – Migration Observatory**

The skilled worker route is the main work visa designed to bring workers to the UK for long-term work. Known in the pre-2021 immigration system as Tier 2 (general), this visa has been the main focus of policy debates about work-related migration. Several other work-related visa routes exist, but they are either short-term temporary visas, or have very specific requirements that most workers do not meet (e.g. requirements to be working as an entrepreneur, or be considered a leader in one's field).

Drawing on data from Freedom of Information (FOI) requests this [report](#) outlines the industries and regions or nations of the UK that have been the most attractive to people coming to the UK on Skilled Worker visas – the main route for newly hired migrants coming from overseas to work. It looks at data from the past decade, including during the pandemic and in the early months of the post-Brexit immigration system in 2021.

Among the key findings:

- London has been the major destination for Skilled Work visa holders over the past decade. It is primarily the finance and scientific/professional sectors that have attracted these overseas workers
- In the rest of the UK, the Health industry has driven demand for overseas Skilled Workers. In 2020, the Health sector was responsible for 60% of all certificates of sponsorship for work visas
- The Covid-19 pandemic affected demand for skilled work visas in London more than in other parts of the UK, which is in part due to the capital making broader use of the Skilled Worker visa route
- As the new immigration system was implemented in the first half of 2021, few EU citizens used the Skilled Worker route

## **Understanding support for Migrant Victims of Domestic Abuse: Survey of support for migrant victims**

The Home Office are trying to better understand the needs of migrant victims of domestic abuse with no recourse to public funds (NRP). They are asking all organisations working in this space to complete a 10-minute survey.

This survey is being conducted by The Behavioural Insights Team on behalf of the Home Office. All responses will be kept confidential. Only aggregate findings will be shared with the Home Office.

This research will inform the Government's [Support for Migrant Victims Scheme](#), helping the Home Office understand the needs of migrant victims of domestic abuse and consider pathways to support.

If you are interested in completing the survey, please click [here](#). If you have any questions, please email [lucy.makinson@bi.team](mailto:lucy.makinson@bi.team)

## **Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner and the Rights Lab launch re-trafficking report, November 2021**

Re-trafficking is generally understood as a situation where a survivor has experienced and left one episode of trafficking but later re-enters another exploitative situation. Re-trafficking is occurring within a UK context. However, whilst re-trafficking is a phenomenon recognised across the anti-slavery sector, it is not a term or a concept that has been clearly defined in domestic law, policy or guidance in a UK context. There is no clear strategy in place for how to address re-trafficking or prevent its occurrence nor is it an issue for which data is routinely available or collated.

This piece of research was conducted in partnership by the Office of the Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner and the Rights Lab. The research sought to better understand the current evidence base in relation to re-trafficking. The research tested the hypothesis that there is no available data and guidance that specifically defines and addresses re-trafficking in a UK context. The research was developed for the purpose of providing a basis from which to begin discussions about the responses required to address re-trafficking.

This report confirms that the evidence base relating to occurrences of re-trafficking – and how to effectively prevent it – is severely limited. The findings presented have been predominantly captured from key informants (government agencies, law enforcement, the charity sector) and the observations and experiences of those who support survivors. To date it appears these experiences have not been translated into policy guidance or into the UK's approach to supporting survivors. Whilst the UK's response to re trafficking is currently lacking this report has been able to identify protective factors thought to reduce and prevent re-trafficking if implemented.

To read the report, click [here](#)

## **Official statistics overview – Modern Slavery: National Referral Mechanism and Duty to Notify statistics UK, Quarter 3 2021 – July to September**

Modern slavery is a term that includes any form of human trafficking, slavery, servitude or forced labour, as set out in the Modern Slavery Act 2015. Potential victims of modern slavery in the UK that come to the attention of authorised 'first responder' organisations are referred to the NRM. Authorised 'first responder' organisations include local authorities, specified NGOs, police forces and specified government agencies.

Key results:

- 3,324 potential victims of modern slavery were referred to the Home Office in the third quarter of 2021, representing a 6% increase compared to the preceding quarter (3,130) and a 33% increase from quarter 3 in 2020 (2,497)
- the number of referrals received this quarter is the second highest since the NRM began in 2009 (the highest number was 3,343 in quarter 4 2019)
- 78% (2,600) were male and 22% (720) were female
- 53% (1,776) of potential victims claimed exploitation in the UK only and 35% (1,176) claimed exploitation overseas only
- the number of potential victims that claimed exploitation overseas this quarter is the highest since the NRM began (previously 1,026 in quarter 4 2020)
- 50% (1,677) of referrals were for potential victims who claimed exploitation as adults and 41% (1,351) claimed exploitation as children
- for adult potential victims, labour exploitation was most commonly reported (39%; 657), whereas child potential victims were most often referred for criminal exploitation (47%; 635)
- the most common nationalities referred this quarter were UK, Albanian and Vietnamese
- 3,332 reasonable grounds and 810 conclusive grounds decisions were made this quarter; of these, 89% of reasonable grounds and 91% of conclusive grounds decisions were positive
- the Home Office received 716 reports of adult potential victims via the Duty to Notify process

To access the full statistical bulletin, click [here](#)



## **No viable alternatives: Social (in)security and risk of labour exploitation during Covid-19 | Focus on Labour Exploitation (FLEX)**

This research explores the experiences of migrant workers in low-paid and insecure work during the Covid-19 pandemic, focusing on barriers to accessing employment rights and social protections, and the associated risks of labour abuse and exploitation.

The research, which surveyed 337 Independent Workers Union of Great Britain (IWGB) and United Voices of the World (UVW) members, found that the key employment issues experienced were not being paid wages owed (44% of participants), being exposed to Covid-19 through work (17%), being asked to work in ways that felt dangerous, including with poor social distancing or without Personal Protective Equipment (12%), and being forced to work despite being ill (8%). There were also significant levels of redundancy (33%), excessive workload (11% saw an unpaid increase in their workload) and an increase in cases of sexual harassment, as employers exploited power imbalances heightened by the pandemic.

The report's findings are especially important in the current context where the pandemic has led to a surge in the number of people in need of welfare support, and where Brexit has led to a seismic overhaul of the UK's immigration system, increasing the number of migrants with no or limited access to social security.

This [report](#) is the result of a partnership between FLEX, IWGB and UVW.

## **Government to deprive Brits of their citizenship without telling them – Free Movement**

The Home Secretary can take away anyone's British citizenship when it would be "conducive to the public good" but would not make that person stateless. She can also take away naturalised citizenship if obtained by fraud, false representation or concealment of a material fact.

The circumstances under which the Home Secretary has exercised this power for "the public good" have largely concerned Brits who travelled to foreign countries to join Islamist terrorist groups. The power has had the practical effect of preventing them from re-entering the UK, meaning they do not become a terrorist threat on domestic soil.

Under amendment NC19 to the Nationality and Borders Bill, the government is seeking to change the law so that people will no longer need to be notified about being stripped of their citizenship.

At present, section 40(5) of the British Nationality Act 1981 provides that the Home Secretary must give "written notice" to a British citizen before they have their citizenship taken away. The British Nationality (General) Regulations 2003, as amended in 2018, allow for notice to be sent to the person's last known address if their whereabouts are unknown. But the recent High Court decision in *R (D4) v Secretary of State for the Home Department* [2021] EWHC 2179 (Admin) found that the 1981 Act did not permit the government to make no effort whatsoever to contact someone before depriving them of citizenship.

The D4 judgment is currently awaiting an appeal hearing. NC19 is an attempt by the government to decide the notice issue outside the courts by changing what the 1981 Act says.

It would put a new subsection 40(5A) into the 1981 Act. This would allow the Home Secretary to ignore the written notice requirement in subsection 40(5), in a number of circumstances.

To read this article in full, click [here](#)

## **Windrush Engagement Events**

Before coronavirus (COVID-19) restrictions, the Home Office ran a series of public events around the country to raise awareness of the Windrush Compensation Scheme and the work of the Windrush Taskforce. Engagement events are now taking place online. These events are open to everyone of any nationality.

Home Office staff also present regularly at events set up by external community organisations for the same purpose.

At all events, information is provided on who may be eligible for the Windrush Compensation Scheme, what kinds of losses and impacts it covers and how to apply. There is also an opportunity to ask questions. Upcoming events are listed [here](#)



## Windrush: Funding for community events

The Home Office has funding available for community events. If you are a registered charity or recognised community group and you want to organise an event to provide information about the Windrush Scheme and Compensation Scheme to people in your networks and communities, you can apply for this funding.

Funding is available for venue hire, light refreshments and other associated costs such as projector screens.

Funding is still available to facilitate digital engagement using the same process as above. The reimbursement claims will need to relate to direct costs involved in organising or facilitating an online event and will continue to require invoice evidence, for example, monthly subscription fees for the digital platform used or WiFi boosters.

Claims for labour costs and promotional materials are not included in this fund. Your event should meet the following criteria:

- to increase awareness of the Windrush Taskforce, the Compensation Scheme and claimant assistance available and encourage eligible people to apply for compensation
- a representative from the Home Office will be invited
- it must be open to all members of the public

The Home Office will prioritise funding for events in locations that have not previously held similar events, or with communities who have not yet been reached through such events.

Please email [Windrusheventfunding@homeoffice.gov.uk](mailto:Windrusheventfunding@homeoffice.gov.uk) for an application form and further information.

## Windrush scheme slide pack

If you would like to find out more information about the Windrush Scheme and Windrush Compensation Scheme, the Home Office have provided a [slide pack](#) for you to read through which includes information on the following:

- Windrush Timeline (from April 2018)
- Windrush Help Team and the Claimant Assistance available
- The Windrush Scheme
- The Windrush Compensation Scheme
- The Windrush Community Fund
- Improvements to the Windrush Compensation Scheme and what these mean for your claim
- How to contact the Windrush Help Team

You can use these to help you share this information within your communities and raise awareness of the Windrush Scheme and Windrush Compensation Scheme.

## Discriminatory digital-only proof of immigration status

A newly published academic article argues that the Government's policy of granting digital-only proof of immigration status for certain groups of migrants is unlawful and threatens to grow into another Windrush scandal. According to the article, there are around 4.5 million people reliant on digital-only proof of their entitlement to reside lawfully in the UK (as of March 2021) and that number is expected to increase significantly over the coming years.

The Government favours digital status as it meets three objectives: increased convenience; reduced costs; and enhanced security. The authors argue that the use of digital-only status is unlawful. They find that it seriously disadvantages various groups with protected characteristics in a way that is not proportionate to its underlying objectives. Using the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) as a case study, the article highlights how EU citizens from groups such as the disabled, older people and Roma/Travellers are being indirectly discriminated against as they are more likely to suffer from digital exclusion (and lack internet connections, smartphones, etc).

Read online [here](#)



## Events and Training

### **Making a difference for our children in care and care leavers - Looked after Children and Care Leavers week: 6-10 December 2021**

The South East region Designated Health Professionals for looked after children and care leavers are delighted to invite you to a series of webinars focussing on what makes a difference to the children and young people in care.

The week's events include:

- Surrey Specialist CAMHS for children in care, care leavers and post order & STARS service
- Refugee Realities - Kent Refugee Action Network (KRAN)
- Looked After Children access to dental care during the Covid-19 pandemic- NHS
- The looked after children and care leavers primary care project- NHS
- Care Leavers: What works

The event is open to all health and social care colleagues. Click [here](#) for the full programme of events and joining links.

### **Introduction to social services support for people with no recourse to public funds – Thursday 9 December 2021 – 11:00-13:00**

Develop your knowledge to identify correct signposting options or referral routes for a person who is at risk of homelessness when they are unable to access benefits and housing due to their immigration status.

This is an introductory course for people who have little or no prior knowledge the support options for people with no recourse to public funds and who may need to make referrals to social services. The training is for:

- Social care staff
- Housing officers
- Healthcare professionals
- Council officers responsible for developing strategies, policies and procedures
- Other professionals who advise non-UK nationals

For more information and to book a place, click [here](#)

### **International Child Protection & Kinship Care training – 26 and 27 January 2022 – Online**

An e-training for children's social workers who work in child protection or on care proceedings cases with a cross border element.

Formerly called the CFAB International Social Work Training. The focus of this training is on social work in an international context; child protection cases that cross international borders; care proceedings with international family resources; and practical issues in international placements.

This training course will be delivered by social workers from Children and Families Across Borders (CFAB) who have had extensive experience in cross border cases. We have an in-depth understanding of local authority processes and an up-to-date understanding of local and international legislation and good practice.

Training Objectives:

- To improve the awareness of good practice and up to date legislation for social workers involved in cross-border children and family cases, including placing children in care with family abroad
- To improve understanding of effective collaboration with overseas authorities
- To improve knowledge of resources and networks available for international collaboration

Children and Families Across Borders (CFAB) is a UK-based charity which identifies and protects children who have been separated from family members as a consequence of trafficking, abduction, migration, divorce, conflict and asylum.

For more information, to book a ticket and for alternative dates, click [here](#)

## **Investing in Integration: How to Support Diverse and Inclusive Communities – Wednesday 15 December 2021 – 14:00-15:30**

To mark International Migrants Day 2021 on 18 December, The [International Organization for Migration](#) and [IMIX](#) are organizing a multi-stakeholder discussion on: Investing in Integration – Perspectives for supporting thriving communities. This panel aims to discuss different ways to invest in integration at the local level in order to support migrants and cohesive communities, and will hear from migrants, grassroots organizations, think tanks and local government. This public event will target stakeholders working on integration, including local government and civil society organisations, as well as the wider public.

This event forms part of a wider suite of activities taking place in the United Kingdom to mark International Migrants Day under the theme of #ItTakesACommunity. The theme reminds of us of our interdependence, our common humanity, and the unique contributions we collectively make to our shared communities.

To find out more about this free online event and to register, click [here](#)

## **Every Child Protected Against Trafficking (ECPAT UK) training – various dates**

ECPAT UK's multidisciplinary team provides a wide range of training courses relating to modern slavery, trafficking and exploitation for individuals and organisations. The training courses currently available are:

- An Overview of Child Trafficking, Modern Slavery and Exploitation
- Child Criminal Exploitation and Trafficking
- Care for child victims of trafficking: Safe accommodation and missing from care

Click [here](#) for more information and training dates.

Catch up with ECPAT UK's youth-led events, report launch events and free webinars on child trafficking and the issues facing survivors in the UK [here](#)

## **The Supporting Refugees and Asylum Seekers Conference 2022: Improving Outcomes Through Partnership Working – Tuesday 8 February 2022 09:00-17:00**

The 2014 Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme, alongside the 2016 Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Scheme, helped nearly 25,000 refugees find safety in the UK until their close in 2021. Covid-19 put resettlement plans on hold through much of 2020, but the UK Resettlement Scheme and Afghan Citizen's Resettlement Scheme are due to resume the UK's commitment to helping refugees. On top of this, with 26,903 asylum applications being made in the last 12 months, it is essential that local authorities and charities work together with national organisations to provide wrap-around support to refugees and asylum seekers. Through the spread of best practice in community support and integration, we can continue to deliver support to people looking to move to a safer life.

- According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, by the end of 2020, there were 132,349 refugees and 77,245 pending asylum cases in the UK
- In 2021, the Guardian found that a quarter of the UK's asylum seekers supported by the Home Office are housed in just 10 local authorities
- Home Office statistics from 2019 report that local authorities spent £152 million on unaccompanied asylum-seeking children in 2017/18
- Around 43% of people seeking asylum in the UK in 2020 were women and children, according to British Red Cross

Join the conference to hear the latest policy and best practice strategies from experts across the public sector. You will hear a range of selected case studies covering a range of key topics, from delivering support to people with no recourse to public funds and giving effective immigration legal advice, to providing holistic care for unaccompanied asylum seeker children and inclusive health service design. You will also have the opportunity to network with colleagues from across the public sector to share common challenges in working in partnership to deliver meaningful support.

Click [here](#) for more information and to book your ticket



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## Funding

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### The Allen Lane Foundation

The Allen Lane Foundation funds small registered charities, voluntary groups, and charitable organisations. The foundation aims to fund work which:

- will make a lasting difference to people's lives rather than simply alleviating the symptoms or current problems
- is aimed at reducing isolation, stigma and discrimination, and
- encourages or enables unpopular groups to share in the life of the whole community.

To make sure the grants have an impact, the foundation only funds smaller organisations. If you work across a local area such as a village, estate or town, to be eligible you will need to have an income of less than around £100,000. At the other end of the spectrum, if you work across the whole of the UK you will need to have an income of less than around £250,000.

More information on the foundation and how to make an application is available [here](#)

The closing date for applications for the February 2022 meeting will be **Friday 10 December**. Applications submitted after 10 December will be considered in the round leading up to the June 2022 meeting.

Please apply as soon as you are ready – applications are processed all the time – and the foundation would appreciate it if you are able to apply well before the deadline.

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## Jobs

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### General Assistant – People from Abroad Team, Norfolk County Council

We currently have an opportunity for two highly motivated and flexible individuals to join the People from Abroad team as General Assistants to help with tasks and practical duties, primarily across Norfolk on a fixed term contract until 31st March 2023.

The successful applicants will help with collecting public donations of goods and furniture, property maintenance and inventories, pat testing, preparing furniture and properties for new tenants and generally assisting with practical tasks and duties to ready a home for families starting a new life in Norfolk or to assist families with small practical tasks as they settle into their new home.

You must possess a full GB/EEA driving license and be prepared to drive a hired van; with experience of driving a long-wheelbase vehicle. Moving and handling tasks are involved in this role on a daily basis, for which appropriate equipment is provided. Experience of moving and handling furniture would be an advantage. You will need to be a well-organised individual with good people and communication skills. Enhanced DBS clearance is required for this post

Experience of working with migrants, asylum seekers, people from other cultures is helpful, as is a positive, creative and non-judgemental approach. If you are a practical individual who is good with small DIY tasks, problem solving and have a drive for excellence you are the type of person we are looking for. You should have an ability to use IT and be able to organise and prioritise your work and to be able to work under your own initiative.

You may be required to work occasional evenings and weekends.

For an informal discussion about the role and the work of the team, please email [nrpf@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:nrpf@norfolk.gov.uk) quoting this job reference.

For further details and to apply, click [here](#)

**Closing date: 12 December 2021**



## **Pashto and Dari sessional interpreter – Yorkshire Humber & Hertfordshire – The Refugee Council**

The Refugee Council are looking for Pashto and Dari interpreters to work mainly with the Resettlement team. The Resettlement team supports newly resettled Afghan families to settle into the UK by supporting with access to housing, welfare benefit and health services. The project will require interpreters to support resettlement advisors in helping these families settle into the UK by meeting them at the airport and facilitating for them in appointments at sites across Yorkshire Humber and Hertfordshire. Ideally, interpreters will have some experience of working with refugees or vulnerable people.

Interpreters support the project by interpreting for clients during their appointments with advisers and volunteers, making sure that there is good communication and that the Refugee Council are able to best support the needs of clients, while making sure they are aware of the work that is being done for them. Issues that clients within the advice services face include issues relating to housing, benefits and health. It is therefore vital that interpreters have both a high level of the spoken language in order to be able to communicate complex issues clearly, and a strong understanding of confidentiality.

For more information and to apply, click [here](#)

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