



[Asylum Seekers and Refugees](#)

[Migration](#)

[Events](#)

[Funding](#)

[Jobs](#)

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.

CONTENT

ASYLUM SEEKERS AND REFUGEES – INCLUDING REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT

- [Homes for Ukraine: Policy Updates](#)
- [ECRE Factsheet: Asylum statistics and the need for protection in Europe](#)
- [Government increases hearing capacity to speed up immigration cases](#)
- [Biological methods to assess unaccompanied asylum-seeking children's age](#)
- [Asylum support increases from £40.85 to £45 per week](#)
- [Third annual inspection of 'Adults at risk in immigration detention', June-September 2022](#)
- [Consultation Outcome - Immigration Legal Aid: A consultation on new fees for new services](#)
- [Unaccompanied asylum seeking children and leaving care: funding instructions](#)

MIGRATION

- ['Fleeing a burning house' – Why torture survivors take dangerous journeys to seek protection in the UK](#)
- [Impact of a lack of legal advice on adults with lived experience of modern slavery](#)
- [Modern slavery: how to identify and support victims](#)
- [Toolkit for Evidence-Informed Policymaking in Migrant Integration](#)
- [An inspection of the immigration system as it relates to the agricultural sector May to August 2022](#)
- [Housing Rights Newsletter, January 2023](#)

EVENTS AND TRAINING

- [Refugee and Displaced Persons Scholarships](#)
- [City of Sanctuary: Local Authorities Annual Thematic Meetings Programme](#)

FUNDING

- [The Bell Foundation – ESOL Programme Partnerships](#)
- [Clear Voice: Language inclusivity grant](#)

JOBS

- [Cambridge Ethnic Community Forum](#)



Asylum Seekers and Refugees – including refugee resettlement

Homes for Ukraine: Policy Updates

On 14 December 2022 Secretary of State for the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) [announced](#) to the Commons several updates to the Home for Ukraine scheme. Key changes include:

- an extension in the duration of ‘thank you’ payments from 12 to 24 months, as well as an increase in the monthly minimum amount given to some hosts, to £500
- £150 million additional funding for local authorities across the UK to help support Ukrainian guests move into their own homes and reduce the risk of homelessness
- Councils in England to get new £500 million fund to acquire housing stock for those fleeing conflict (including from Ukraine and Afghanistan) and reduce homelessness
- New potential hosts urged to come forward and apply to re-match existing guests through the scheme

The [council guides](#), published on 16 January 2023, aim to support councils to understand what checks are needed for potential sponsors and their accommodation, how to access and use Foundry and the council's role in the scheme.

ECRE Factsheet: Asylum statistics and the need for protection in Europe

This ECRE [paper](#) focuses on the need for statistics to be comprehensive and reliable in both their content and presentation, if they are to be used in support of arguments and decisions. A number of factors mean caution must be exercised when handling asylum numbers, otherwise, statistics themselves can both directly misrepresent and be used to misrepresent the actual need for protection in Europe. As such, ECRE has updated its [factsheet](#) on asylum statistics first produced in 2020, outlining the major misrepresentations and misuses of asylum statistics on protection rates, with reference to the latest annual figures on asylum to illustrate the points on which caution should be used.

Government increases hearing capacity to speed up immigration cases

The UK Government has [announced](#) that thousands more immigration cases are to be heard over the next few months, with an aim of speeding up asylum claim decisions. This comes as a part of the 5-step plan to address illegal immigration, announced by the Prime Minister in his [statement](#) on 13 December 2022. To achieve this, plans are in place to increase the number of days tribunals can operate, supported by a £5 million government investment. These adjustments aim to enable up to 9,000 of the 25,000 cases currently in the system, to be heard before the end of March. This includes appeals to the tribunal on cases from failed asylum seekers, as well as those claiming that being forced to leave the UK would breach their human rights.

Biological methods to assess unaccompanied asylum-seeking children's age

This [report](#), published on 10 January 2023, was carried out by the interim Age Estimation Science Advisory Committee (AESAC) and commissioned by the Home Office Chief Scientific Adviser. It sets out the current situation on age estimation, the need for change, and a discussion of age estimation methods when carrying out age assessments on unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC).

Specifically, the committee were asked to focus on methods that could be implemented within 12 to 18 months and would assist with estimating whether a person was likely to be under or over 16 or 18 years of age.

The advice in this report focuses on:

- guidance on the ethical use of medical imaging techniques
- consideration of the accuracy, reliability and the likely range of estimated ages



- consideration of any medical or ethical risks to the person being assessed and whether these risks would apply equally to all groups who may be assessed
- consideration of any benefits, when compared to the existing method, and whether those benefits would apply equally to all groups who may be assessed
- whether methods should be used in combination or sequentially
- consideration of requirements for implementing these techniques.

Asylum support increases from £40.85 to £45 per week

On 21 December 2022, in *R(CB) v Secretary of State for the Home Department [2022] EWHC 3329 (Admin)*, the High Court ruled that the Home Secretary has unlawfully failed to provide enough support for the essential living needs of asylum seekers in the cost of living crisis. It was noted that internal Home Office advice to the Home Secretary revealed that the current asylum support rate of £40.85 per week is no longer sufficient to meet basic living needs due to rising inflation. While officials recommended that the rate must be increased in order to protect asylum seekers from destitution, the Home Secretary did not act on this advice.

On 22 December 2022, the Home Office announced an increase to the rates of asylum support as follows:

- an interim main rate of £45 to all supported under sections 4 and 95 of the IAA 1999;
- an interim rate of £9.10 for those in full board accommodation supported under section 95 of the IAA 1999;
- removal of the self-catering £35 rate and replaced by the interim £45 rate.

Read more about this case and judgement, [here](#)

Third annual inspection of 'Adults at risk in immigration detention', June-September 2022

This is the third annual Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration (ICIBI) inspection [report](#) of the 'Adults at risk in immigration detention' policy, published in January 2023. It focuses on the effectiveness and efficiency of Rule 35 of the Detention Centre Rules 2001, which is in place to safeguard individuals in detention who are particularly vulnerable. Covering physical health, suicidal intention and torture respectively, the mechanism requires firstly an assessment by a doctor in an Immigration Removal Centre (IRC) of an individual's specific physical and mental state, and then an assessment of the impact of ongoing detention on that individual. The Home Office weighs this health assessment against immigration and public protection considerations to decide whether detention remains appropriate. This inspection found that this safeguard was not working consistently or effectively.

The report makes 10 recommendations relating to rule 35. In its [response](#), the Home Office has accepted 2 of these recommendations in full, and partially accepted the remaining 8.

Consultation Outcome - Immigration Legal Aid: A consultation on new fees for new services

This government consultation proposed new fees to ensure that immigration legal aid fees properly reflect the changes coming to the immigration system via the New Plan for Immigration and digitisation of the immigration tribunal. This consultation ran from 13 June 2022 to 5 September 2022, and 30 responses were received. The respondents included legal aid providers, representative bodies of legal aid providers, third sector organisations, and individuals responding in their own capacity.

Read the outcome of this consultation in full, [here](#)



Unaccompanied asylum seeking children and leaving care: funding instructions

[These](#) updated funding instructions to local authorities (2022-2023), for the support and care of former and unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC), have been updated to include the Temporary additional funding - National Transfer Scheme, and an additional funding sheet.

Migration

‘Fleeing a burning house’ – Why torture survivors take dangerous journeys to seek protection in the UK

This Freedom from Torture [report](#) explores the factors that push torture survivors from their country of origin and onwards towards safety in the UK. It identifies the diverse reasons for fleeing, the traumas faced along their journey’s, forcing survivors to keep moving and continuing on to the UK. This report uses evidence drawn from Freedom from Torture clients testimony and puts forward 7 recommendations for the UK government to ensure it is upholding its commitment to the 1951 Refugee Convention.

Impact of a lack of legal advice on adults with lived experience of modern slavery

This is a [summary](#) of the [report](#): ‘Impacts of a lack of legal advice on adults with lived experience of modern slavery’, based on research conducted by the British Institute of International and Comparative Law (BIICL) in partnership with Unseen UK and their lived experience consultants’ group. The project examined the experiences of access to legal advice in the United Kingdom for adults with lived experience of modern slavery, as well as the impacts of a lack of access to quality legal advice on wellbeing, recovery, and protection outcomes.

The research makes 8 recommendations, including for the UK Government to make free legal advice available for people with lived experience of modern slavery. The report also calls for a collaborative approach to legal advice provision to improve the identification of legal needs and timely, supported referrals to appropriate legal services, while also promoting a model of holistic legal advice provision that places the wellbeing of the client at its centre.

Modern slavery: how to identify and support victims

This statutory [guidance](#) published in March 2020, describes the signs that someone may be a victim of modern slavery, the support available to victims, and the process for determining whether someone is a victim. The guidance was updated in January 2023, including updates to Annex E, the glossary and the Victim's Journey, and updates to the financial support rates and guidance in paragraphs 15.54, 15.55, and 15.58 of the Financial Support section in Annex F.

Toolkit for Evidence-Informed Policymaking in Migrant Integration

This [toolkit](#) aims to help policymakers, program implementers, and other actors involved in migrant integration efforts more fully leverage evidence in their work, promoting the development of an evidence culture in the field. In Sections 1 to 4, it presents tools and strategies to infuse evidence into different phases of the policy cycle—from policy design and implementation to program evaluation and dissemination of the evidence collected. In Sections 5 and 6, the toolkit offers resources on two issues that are important throughout the cycle: funding and stakeholder engagement.

An inspection of the immigration system as it relates to the agricultural sector May to August 2022

This Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration (ICIBI) [report](#) examines three areas:



- the effectiveness of the routes available to support the agricultural sector
- the extent and quality of communication and engagement between the Home Office and the sector
- how the Home Office assures itself that sponsors of agricultural workers are upholding their compliance requirements, including those relating to worker welfare

The ICIBI makes 3 recommendations to the government in this report, which have all been [accepted](#) by the Home Office.

Housing Rights Newsletter, January 2023

This quarter's [newsletter](#) from the housing rights website includes the following news items and articles:

- The government's immigration plans for 2023
- Government doubles down on Rwanda deportations
- Brexit leads to record migration, not less
- Helping Ukrainian refugees – latest developments
- Contrasts between help for Ukrainians and help for other refugees
- Asylum – the continuing controversy of the use of hotels
- Asylum – latest news on detention centres
- More news and views on asylum issues
- Helping people with “No recourse to public funds”
- The EU Settlement Scheme – help for some with pre-settled status
- Migrants who suffer domestic abuse
- Latest research news
- New sources of guidance
- Other migration news

Events and Training

Refugee and Displaced Persons Scholarships

The University of London is offering scholarships to refugees and displaced persons. The available scholarships are as follows:

- 2 [MSc Accounting and Financial Management](#) scholarships
- 3 [MSc Professional Accountancy](#) scholarships
- 10 [Postgraduate Laws LLM](#) scholarships

Applications are considered on a rolling basis. Find out how to apply, [here](#)

City of Sanctuary: Local Authorities Annual Thematic Meetings Programme

Annual Programme of Thematic Events - Save the Dates

The LAs steering group have agreed the following dates and themes for the upcoming year:

1. 'Hotel Accommodation' 21st March 12-1:30pm
2. 'Legal Advice and NRPF' 23rd May 12-1:30pm
3. 'Children of Sanctuary Seeking background' 11th July 12:1:30pm

4. 'Employment, Education and Training' 19th Sept 12:1:30pm
5. 'Awards, Plenary and Housing' 5th Dec 12-1:30pm

In The City Of Sanctuary's first Thematic Meeting of the year 'Hotel Accommodation', the way in which local authorities and their partners have been supporting Contingency Hotel Accommodation, will be discussed. The meeting will cover issues around health, school admissions, adult education, regulatory checks, food provision, community cohesion and advocating for change.

Register for this online event, [here](#)

Funding

The Bell Foundation – ESOL Programme Partnerships

The Bell Foundation is looking for partners to join together to unlock English language proficiency for workers for their own social and economic wellbeing, as well as the wellbeing of the wider social economy.

Research has linked emerging proficiency in English for workers with financial precarity, limited employability, social isolation, limited access to healthcare, and difficulty communicating effectively in English-speaking community settings such as their children's schools (Humphries et al, 2015) (Rights Lab, 2022). Research exploring the perspectives of migrant workers, including barriers to full participation in the regional economy and barriers to social inclusion in local communities, identified language as the 'chief barrier' (Schneider and Holman, 2011).

Meaningful solutions are likely to involve a network of stakeholders. As such, The Bell Foundation particularly welcome joint bids from consortia including employers, charitable organisations, local or regional authorities, employer associations, colleges, and academics, in order to work together to bring about system change.

Click [here](#) for more information about this offer and to download an Expression of Interest (EOI) form.

Deadline for EOI submissions is 31 March 2023

Clear Voice: Language inclusivity grant

Clear Voice's Language Inclusivity Grant provides charities, social enterprises, and other non-profits with up to £2,500 of pro bono interpreting or translation. Applications are open every six months, giving organisations two opportunities per year to receive this support. The funding aims to help charities, social enterprises, and other non-profits overcome language barriers, ensuring their services are inclusive of those who do not speak English.

Deadline for submission: Applications are open until 10 March 2023, however, may close earlier depending on the volume of applicants

Read the full application requirements and criteria and find out how to apply, [here](#)

Jobs

Cambridge Ethnic Community Forum

[Project Worker Refugee Services](#)



6 months fixed term contract until 30 September 2023

Part Time 14 hours per week

Salary: £27,852 (pro rata)

Location: Cambridge

Application closing date: 5 March 2023 and interviews starting w/c 6 March 2023

Learn more about how to apply for this role, [here](#)

Equality Service Advisor – CECF Development and Equality Service (DES)

5 Years' fixed term contract until 31 March 2028

Part Time 15 hours per week

£29,439 (pro rata)

Location: Cambridge

Application closing date: 5 March 2023 and interviews starting w/c 6 March

Learn more about how to apply for this role, [here](#)

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