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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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Asylum Seekers and Refugees – including refugee resettlement

Afghan schemes: funding instructions 2023 to 2024

Published on 26 May 2023, [these](#) funding instructions (FI) include:

- Funding instruction for Afghan schemes: integration support, 2023 to 2024
- Funding instruction for Afghan schemes: hotel and temporary accommodation wraparound support, 2023 to 2024

These FI have since been updated to include the below added document:

- Funding healthcare in England in support of the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme and the Afghan Relocation and Assistance Policy and eligible British nationals

Afghan Resettlement: 'Pre-matching' Guidance

This Home Office guidance sets out the 'pre-matching' process being used to move people from bridging hotels to settled accommodation via Home Office funded interim accommodation, if their settled accommodation is not move-in ready by the time their bridging hotel has closed.

Households can be pre-matched under this process if:

- they accept an accommodation offer before they are required to leave bridging accommodation
- they are ready to move in by 31 December 2023

Eligibility: Only households who have been continuously living in bridging accommodation, as defined in the Bridging accommodation exit guidance, are eligible for pre-matching.

Pre-matching does not apply to households overseas who are yet to come to the UK.

For more information, visit the government [website](#).

Refugee Employability Programme (REP): New Programme Designed to help Refugees Thrive in the East of England

A new Government funded [Programme](#) is being launched to speed up self-sufficiency and job placement for refugees across the East of England. The Refugee Employability Programme (REP), backed by the Home Office, is designed to enhance the support already provided to refugees to help them integrate and become self-sufficient more quickly.

[Get Set UK](#), a national people services and training provider, will be delivering this new support contract through a package of services to the local refugee community.

Launching on 4 September 2023, the key benefits of the new service will mean more refugees gain sustainable employment, or create self-employment, at a faster pace than current rates. This new service is tailored to the individual's needs to help guarantee long-lasting impact and will include back-into-employment support, English language support and integration support. The service will also offer advice and guidance to those who wish to pursue self-employment in the UK.

Through this new programme, local businesses will be able to gain access to a pool of prospective employees that might otherwise be missed despite their talent and drive.

This programme draws on Get Set UK's expertise in providing opportunities for those in need; their personal one-to-one approach focuses on the individual's needs and tailors the guidance and training to meet those needs.

If you would like to access the Refugee Employability Programme (REP) services, call Get Set UK on 0808 175 6868 or email rep-eastofengland@getsetuk.co.uk. Visit <https://www.getsetuk.co.uk/REPEastOfEngland> to find out more.

Step Ukraine



The UK government is funding [STEP Ukraine](#), which provides free online English lessons and employment support for up to 10,000 Ukrainian arrivals to help them improve their job prospects. The aim of STEP Ukraine is to help Ukrainians improve their English language skills and gain new employment or employment more in line with their skill level through the provision of English language training and employment support. The STEP Ukraine programme is delivered by World Jewish Relief in partnership with the British Council.

Councils are encouraged to share this programme information as appropriate.

Applications for this intensive programme can be made on the World Jewish Relief website or via Wellbeing and Work for Refugee integration employment advisors.

Enrolment to this programme is on a rolling basis. Those interested are encouraged to register as soon as possible to secure their place on the programme.

Employability for Overseas Nationals

As we reach the conclusion of the [Well being and Work for Refugee Integration Project - EELGA SMP](#), which has been a massive success since its launch in April 2020, the SMP team has been looking at successor funding to develop an employability programme to complement the central government initiatives: REP and STEP Ukraine.

From November 2023, **Employability for Overseas Nationals (EON)** will offer employment advice to a range of people who are not eligible for REP or STEP Ukraine. These include arrivals under VPRS/VCRS, Hong Kongers as well as former UASC who are now 18 and have permission to work. EON will also work with Ukrainians who are unable to commit to the 17 hours of ESOL provided under STEP Ukraine. We will continue to work with resettled refugees and others who have completed higher education and other professional qualifications.

EON will focus on recruitment into adult social care in particular, since this sector has many and varied vacancies and promotion opportunities. It is also an interesting route to return to medical careers.

Please contact Gill.searl@eelga.gov.uk for more information and click [here](#) to learn about how the three programmes differ.

Illegal Migration Bill: overarching factsheet

The [Illegal Migration Act](#) received Royal Assent on 20 July 2023. It changes the law so that those who arrive in the UK by irregular means will not be able to stay here and will instead be detained and then promptly removed, either to their home country or a safe third country.

This [factsheet](#) briefly sets out the UK government plans now that the bill has been passed, the reasons for introducing the bill, and the measures included in it.

Asylum seekers arrive at Wethersfield accommodation site

Asylum seekers have moved to the first large-scale asylum accommodation site in the UK as part of the government's pledge to reduce the use of expensive hotels.

Wethersfield is one of several alternative accommodation sites the government is using to accommodate asylum seekers. Forty-six asylum seekers arrived at the former military site in Wethersfield, Essex on Wednesday 12 July with more arrivals over the following weeks. This is part the UK governments structured plan to increase the number of asylum seekers there to 1,700 by this autumn.

Read the full news story [here](#).

Independent report: A re-inspection of Border Force's management of Project KRAKEN at small seaports

This inspection revisited Border Force's management of Project Kraken at small seaports, focusing on its effectiveness, following its relaunch in the summer of 2022.

Project KRAKEN is one part of the operational response to this threat at the border, through co-ordinated multi-agency operational and prevention activity. ICIBI's inspection of this area in 2021 looked at the effectiveness of Border Force's role in managing the project. It highlighted difficulties in measuring the project's success due to the low and declining number of referrals, which was indicative of issues with the reporting mechanisms and low levels of public awareness.



Border Force's management of Project Kraken at small seaports

Home Office response to the re-inspection of Border Force's management of Project Kraken at small seaports. Published in June but covering the January-February 2023 period. The ICIBI identified several areas for improvement and has made a total of four recommendations: develop a mechanism to track the outcomes of intelligence, allocate an annual budget for Project Kraken work, develop an engagement strategy and develop and finance its own social media campaign. The Home Office has fully accepted one recommendation, partially accepted one, and not accepted two.

To read this paper in depth, follow the link [here](#)

UNHCR Report: 'Asylum screening in the UK'

This UNHCR report is an audit of the UK's asylum intake, registration and screening procedures, which set out 13 recommendations for change. In March 2021, the Home Office and UNHCR, working together through the Quality Protection Partnership, agreed that UNHCR would carry out this audit to assess the effectiveness of these procedures and make recommendations for improvement. The recommendations as set out by the UNHCR cover all aspects of the registration and screening system, from staffing to administrative efficiency to triaging and routing policy.

Read the full report and recommendations made, [here](#)

National Audit Office Report: The asylum and protection transformation programme

The Home Office began developing the asylum and protection transformation programme in 2021. The programme's vision is to create a system "that is fair, supportive and efficient, where decisions made are right first time and customers in need of protection receive it quickly, and all are treated with dignity and respect."

This report examines the Home Office's progress in delivering the asylum and protection transformation programme. It discusses the potential impact of the programme on parts of the wider asylum system – i.e. any parts of the Home Office and other government organisations that a person who has applied for asylum may need to interact with.

You can read the full report and conclusions, [here](#)

The Home Office and Border Force updated policy paper

Home Office response to the ICIBI's report: A re-inspection of initial processing of migrants arriving via small boats, including at Western Jet Foil and Manston. The paper offered three updated recommendations covering Strategy, Data and Training. The Home Office responded to each, partially accepting feedback on strategy and fully accepting on data and training.

To read the detailed responses, follow the link to the paper [here](#)

Cost of living crisis and NRPF, May 2023

This Praxis [briefing](#) presents an analysis of how people with no recourse to public funds (NRPF) in the UK are faring in the cost of living crisis. It draws on publicly available information on Government support schemes, as well as information about the experiences of people with NRPF over the last 6 months of this crisis. This information is drawn from a survey carried out by Praxis in April 2023, which was completed by 174 people subject to immigration control.

High Court delivers landmark ruling safeguarding the rights of children seeking asylum

[This](#) Refugee Council article sets out the 27 July 2023 judgement, in ECPAT UK, R (On the Application Of) v Kent County Council & Anor [2023] EWHC 1953, in which the High Court found that both the Home Office and Kent County Council had acted unlawfully in their treatment of unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC). The



judgement established that the Home Office's use of hotels to accommodate this cohort of children, and Kent County Council's withdrawal of support they are obligated to provide under the Children Act 1989, were in breach of law. UASC should instead be placed in the care of a local authority, as mandated by section 20 of the Children Act.

The [National Transfer Scheme Protocol for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children](#) has now been updated to reflect this judgement.

Additional funding instructions - National Transfer Scheme

This [guidance](#) sets out the additional funding of £6,000 local authorities will receive for the transfer of each UASC into their care, transferred from a UASC hotel. We are currently awaiting the updated Additional funding instructions regarding children transferred to other local authorities from Kent County Council, to reflect the outcome of the above case.

Migration

45 community groups awarded Windrush Day funding

More than 40 groups have been awarded funding up to £750,000 through the Windrush Day Grant Scheme for arts, educational and sporting projects across England. More than 200 Windrush Day projects have received a share of the £2.75 million funding over four years in celebration of the contributions of the Windrush generation and their families. These community-led initiatives will celebrate the anniversary with events and activities taking place between 8 June and 31 August this year.

Read the article in full, [here](#)

Community projects supporting Hong Kongers receives £2.6m funding

On 26 June 2023, organisations supporting Hong Kongers to come and live and work in the UK were awarded £2.6 million by the UK government. As part of the Welcome Programme, which began in 2023, this further year of funding has been allocated to 47 civil society organisations, providing BN(O) visa holders with vital language, employment, and mental health support.

Previous funding rounds focused on Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) organisations to support BN(O)s in areas such as employability, mental health and wellbeing, and social integration.

Read this Home Office press release in full, [here](#).

Home Office guidance on English language testing

This guidance sets out that for visa or citizenship applications, applicants may need to prove their knowledge of English by passing a secure English language test (SELT).

There are 2 types of test as different immigration routes require different levels of English language ability. The test needed will depend on which application route is being applied for.

Read more about which tests will be needed for the different immigration routes, [here](#)

£2.5 million funding boost to support vulnerable EUSS applicants

An additional £2.5 million in grant funding will go to 17 organisations across the UK that support vulnerable people in applying to the EU Settlement Scheme.

The latest grant funding will continue through to spring 2025 and will bring the total amount of support for the grant funded network of organisations to £32 million since 2019. This funding will help to ensure that support reaches a range of vulnerable groups, including those with disabilities, the elderly and isolated, children and victims of domestic violence or abuse, to help them apply to the EUSS, including to switch from pre-settled to settled status.

More details can be found [here](#). Full list of organisations can also be found [here](#).



Changes to student visa route will reduce net migration

New government restrictions to student visa routes will cut net migration by restricting the ability for international students to bring family members on all but post-graduate research routes. These reforms will come into effect from January 2024.

The ONS estimated that net migration was over 500,000 from June 2021 to June 2022. Although partly attributed to the rise in temporary factors, such as the UK's Ukraine and Hong Kong schemes, last year almost half a million student visas were issued, while the number of dependants of overseas students has increased by 750% since 2019, to 136,000 people.

Read this article in full [here](#)

New law confirms British citizenship for children of EU citizens born in UK before 2 October 2000

[This](#) Free Movement article sets out the new [British Nationality \(Regularisation of Past Practice\) Act 2023](#), which came into force on 29 June 2023. The Act inserts a new section 50B into the British Nationality Act 1981, which had historically changed the status of children being born in the UK from receiving automatic citizenship to requiring at least one parent to be British or 'settled' at the time of birth, when it came into force on 1 January 1983.

Section 50B definitively and retrospectively confirms the British nationality status of all children born in the UK between 1 January 1983 and 1 October 2000 to an EU citizen parent who was exercising free movement in the UK at the time of their child's birth, thus confirming the parents were 'settled' for the purposes of their UK-born children's automatic acquisition of British citizenship under section 1(1)(b) of the British Nationality Act 1981.

Find a summary of the Act in this Home Office [factsheet](#)

More Than Half of Child Trafficking Victims are Trafficked Within Their Own Countries

This IOM-Harvard [report](#), a first of its kind, is based on analysis of extensive, globally sourced data, using the IOM Victims of Trafficking Database (VoTD). The VoTD contains primary data collected from approximately 69,000 victims of human trafficking of 156 nationalities, trafficked in 186 countries, who registered with IOM in 113 countries where the Organization works; 18.3 per cent of VoTs in the database were children.

The report reveals that more than half of child trafficking victims are trafficked within their own country, and in cases of international trafficking, children are mostly trafficked to neighbouring, wealthier countries.

Read a summary of this report, [here](#)

Immigration: Thinking Behind the Numbers, Understanding Public Opinion on Immigration in Britain

"Current public attitudes to immigration are defined as 'cake-ism' where the public's desire for an increase in the immigration of 'high-skilled' workers and 'workers in jobs where there are shortages' clashes with a continued long-standing desire to reduce the overall numbers of immigrants coming to Britain".

To understand the nuance of public opinion towards migration, in April 2023, Kantar Public and the Migration Observatory conducted a snap poll to answer the question: what does the British public think about immigration? In 2011 the Migration Observatory first completed research and analysis known as 'Thinking Behind the Numbers'. They have largely replicated this approach again in 2023. Some questions have been revised or added to account for the changing policy landscape over the last twelve years. This report revisits some of those initial findings and how public perceptions and attitudes have changed today (April 2023).

Read the report [here](#)

Events and Training

NRPF Network: Social services' support for families with no recourse to public funds
11 September 2023 and 18 October 2023



Develop your knowledge and skills to effectively respond to requests for accommodation and financial support made by families who are unable to access benefits and housing assistance due to their immigration status. For registration and details, visit [here](#).

Funding

The Community Justice Fund

The Community Justice Fund is a joint initiative focused on supporting the provision of specialist social welfare legal advice across the UK.

We are delighted to announce the launch of “Improving Lives Through Advice” – a new multi-year core costs grants programme being delivered in partnership with the Community Justice Fund.

Improving Lives Through Advice is supported by £30 million from The National Lottery Community Fund, the largest community funder in the UK, to provide access to specialist social welfare legal advice. Thanks to National Lottery players, the funding will enable expert organisations to support some of the most marginalised communities in England – including people with disabilities, women fleeing abuse and families facing eviction.

A recording of the Q&A session which took place on 14 August will be made available on the Community Justice Fund [website](#).

Jobs

RAMFEL are recruiting a Legal Aid Manager

The Refugee and Migrant Forum of Essex and London (RAMFEL) is one of the largest immigration and asylum advice charities in the UK, supporting refugees, asylum seekers and vulnerable migrants to access justice. An OISC level 3 accredited organisation, we represent clients at all stages of the immigration and asylum process, up to and including the Upper Tribunal of the Immigration and Asylum Chamber. We also actively campaign for a fairer and more humane immigration system. RAMFEL caseworkers therefore have the opportunity to work on systemic and strategic challenges and support broader advocacy work.

For more information and application pack, click [here](#).

Cambridge Ethnic Community Forum are recruiting for a Finance Officer

Location: Cambridge

Contract: 16 hours per week

Salary: £29,439 (pro rata)

Closing date : 15 September 2023

Based in our Arbury Court Offices, the post-holder will have at least two years relevant experience. Ideally with a relevant degree, accounting, or book-keeping qualification.

For more information and application pack, click [here](#).

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