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The Newsflash is a bi-monthly round up of publications, information, events, funding, research and jobs relating to asylum seekers, refugees and migrant workers for anyone who wants to keep up to date with the latest developments.

It is produced by the East of England Local Government Association - Strategic Migration Partnership.

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## Asylum Seekers and Refugees – including refugee resettlement

### Migration and Economic Development Partnership (Rwanda Bill)

On 14 February 2024, following the findings of the Supreme Court that [removal of asylum seekers to Rwanda](#) was unlawful based on available evidence at the time, the Home Secretary clarified that decision-making on inadmissibility of asylum seekers has been paused until work to address the Supreme Court's findings is completed. [Read the statement in full.](#)

The Modern Slavery and Human Rights Policy and Evidence Centre (Modern Slavery PEC), funded and supported by the UK Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), commissioned a [legal analysis of the Rwanda Treaty and Bill](#) with regards to the UK's international obligations to victims of modern slavery and human trafficking.

See also: [Joint civil society statement on the Rwanda Bill for Second Reading in the House of Lords.](#)

### Home Office report on Safe and Legal Routes

In January 2024, the UK Government published its [report on Safe and Legal routes](#) into the UK, pursuant to its commitment set out under Section 61 of the Illegal Migration Act. The report sets out the 'safe and legal routes' by which people may enter the UK, covering country specific routes e.g. Hong Kong British National (Overseas), Afghanistan and Ukraine); global resettlement schemes; and other routes such as family reunion.

### Home Office Statistics: Irregular Migration to the UK

In the period 1 January – 2 April 2024 the Home Office recorded 5,435 irregular arrivals into the UK, and it has been widely [reported](#) during this period that these figures represent an increase on previous years. Provisional numbers of small boat crossings during the past seven days are updated [here](#); finalised data since 2018 are available [here](#).

### UK Government: Updates to Ukraine schemes

The [Ukraine Family Scheme](#), which allowed eligible Ukrainian nationals to join family members or extend their stay in the UK, closed on 19 February 2024. Those who were granted permission to reside in the UK before this date can live, work and study and access public funds for up to three years.

On 19 February 2024, changes to the Immigration Rules for applications were laid. These changes apply from 15:00GMT on 19 February. These mean that people submitting [Homes for Ukraine Scheme](#) visa applications after this time will be granted 18 months permission rather than 36.

Additionally, on 19 February 2024 changes were also made to the guidance on approved sponsors to require that new sponsors of Homes for Ukraine applications must be either British or Irish citizens or have indefinite leave to remain (ILR) in the UK and commit to a minimum 6-month sponsorship period.

Ukrainian nationals can apply under the [Ukraine Extension Scheme](#) until it closes on 16 May 2024 if one of the following is true: they had permission to be in the UK on or between 18 March 2022 and 16 November 2023 – the permission does not need to cover the whole period; or they previously had permission to be in the UK and that permission expired on or after 1 January 2022.

The Ukraine Extension Scheme will remain open after 16 May 2024 for children who are born in the UK. Ukrainian nationals can apply under the Ukraine Extension Scheme for a child born if they were in the UK after 18 March 2022 if one of the following is true: they have permission to be in the UK under one of the Ukraine Schemes (including the Ukraine Family Scheme); they qualify under the Ukraine Extension Scheme. This route does not require a UK-based sponsor.

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**Forced Adulthood: The Home Office's incorrect determination of age and how this leaves child refugees at risk**  
A [report](#) published in January 2024 by the Helen Bamber Foundation, Humans for Rights Network and the Refugee Council identifies challenges in accurate age assessments for young asylum seekers, the potential risks to safeguarding when children are treated as adults, and the strain this can place on local resources.

**Commission on the Integration of Refugees: From Arrival to Integration: Building communities for refugees and for Britain**

The Commission on the Integration of Refugees, an independent body that aims to improve the integration of refugees, published its [flagship report](#) in March 2024. The report included recommendations for refugee integration policies and practices that work for refugees and host communities, drawing on evidence from asylum seekers, refugees, academics, stakeholders and policymakers. Economic modelling points to the net economic benefit of increasing refugees' access to English classes, skills recognition and training, and enabling asylum seekers to work after six months' waiting for a decision. Policy recommendations include calls for local decision-makers to be granted greater influence and for central government to remove siloed funding packages for different groups of refugees.

**UK Trauma Council: New resources for adults supporting children and young people seeking asylum**

The UK Trauma Council has produced a [suite of toolkits](#) for organisations, staff and volunteers working with children and young people seeking asylum in the UK, to raise awareness of childhood trauma amongst those that do not have mental health training. These are aimed at:

- Providers of supported accommodation;
- Educational communities; and
- Community organisations.

**Inspection reports and impact assessments of UK migration policy**

The Independent Chief Inspector's most recent collection of reports providing findings and recommendations for improvement on migration policy to the Home Office are [available here](#).

You can also find the Home Office's impact assessments on migration policy, covering the economic impact of the Illegal Migration Bill, changes to the Ukraine schemes, health charges and salary cap among other policies, [here](#).

**NRPF Network: High Court rules that councils are responsible for accommodating asylum seekers with care needs**

A case heard at the High Court found that a London council acted unlawfully by not providing accommodation for an asylum seeker with care needs. The [article](#) includes potential implications for local government such as the importance of correctly identifying 'accommodation-related' needs of a person with NRPF as per councils duty under the Care Act, and the need to address cost increases that are likely following the case.

**Migrants' Rights Network: Petition to the UK Government for a Gaza Family Scheme**

Civil society organisations have submitted a petition to the Home Secretary calling for safe and legal routes to the UK for Gazan Palestinians until it is safe to return. Read the [full letter](#).

**Right to Remain: new Public Legal Education website**

Right to Remain, who support communities and organisations understand the UK asylum system, have published a new [public education portal](#) consolidating their Right to Remain toolkit about the asylum process, videos on legal procedures, guidance and factsheets.

## Migrants' Rights Network : Gender, Queerness and Migration campaign

As part of their '[Who is Welcome: Gender, Queerness and Migration](#)' campaign, Migrants' Rights Network (MRN) has published an [article](#) titled 'Burden of Proof', examining the situation faced by queer and trans people when navigating the asylum system and proving their identities.

## Migration

### UK Government: Written Submission to the Regional Review of the Global Compact for Migration (GCM)

In March 2024, the UK Government submitted a voluntary written return to the second Regional Review of the GCM in the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) region. The submission outlined the government's and stakeholders' actions and priorities to deliver on the 23 objectives and 10 guiding principles of the GCM for safe, orderly and regular migration in all its forms. [Read the report](#). Read more about the GCM processes [here](#).

### UK Government: new Youth Mobility Schemes

From 31 January 2024, the UK has new bilateral arrangements with Andorra and Uruguay permitting young Brits to live, work or study abroad, with reciprocal arrangements for youth of these countries to come to the UK for up to two years. In the same announcement, the Government expanded the quotas and eligibility criteria for existing arrangements with Australia, Canada, Japan and South Korea. Read the [news story](#).

### UK Government: Online immigration status (eVisa) update

Throughout 2024, the government is replacing physical immigration documents (i.e. Biometric Residence Permits) with digital proof of immigration status for people already living in the UK and new visa customers. This will be rolled out in phases. Full details on the policy change and what is required to register for a UKVI account are available from the [UK Government website eVisa information pages](#). *At this stage it is recommended to sign up for updates via the website*. Instructional videos subtitled and/or dubbed into common community languages will be available on the Home Office's YouTube account soon.

In March-April 2024, the Home Office is running a small-scale 'private beta' launch by email invitation to a small number of BRP holders to help develop and ensure an optimal customer experience. *Only BRP holders who receive an email invitation need to take action at this stage*. The Home Office intends to launch a wider phased rollout from spring 2024. Initially this will be to BRP holders by invitation only, in phases, before the service is rolled-out to all BRP holders from summer 2024.

Organisations and individuals who are required to check immigration status should continue to use the usual online checking services:

- Employers: [www.gov.uk/view-right-to-work](http://www.gov.uk/view-right-to-work)
- Landlords: [www.gov.uk/view-right-to-rent](http://www.gov.uk/view-right-to-rent)
- All other checks: [www.gov.uk/check-immigration-status](http://www.gov.uk/check-immigration-status)

### UK Government: New £2 million fund to provide one-off payments to victims of domestic abuse to help them leave their tormentors

This new fund is accessible to those under NRPF conditions who are experiencing domestic abuse. It can cover essential items such as groceries or support with new accommodation up to £500, as well as a further payment of up to £2,500 to support survivors establish a secure future, for example by placing a deposit on accommodation. The fund is initially available until March 2025. Read the [UK Government press release](#).

### UK Government: Student visas

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On 1 January 2024, the Home Office and Visas and Immigration announced that international students will no longer be able to bring family members with them to the UK, with the exception of those on postgraduate research courses and courses with UK government-funded scholarships. [Read the press release.](#)

### **UK Government: Cutting net migration**

In January 2024, the Home Secretary announced the laying down of new rules to cut net migration including restricting care workers from bringing dependants and an increase to the minimum salary requirements for those applying for the Skilled Worker and Family Visas. [Read the news story.](#)

### **International Organisation for Migration: Updated analysis of the National Referral Mechanism data**

The International Organisation for Migration (IOM), who undertake data analysis of the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) to identify and support potential victims of modern slavery and trafficking, released its latest set of trends in January 2024. These trends highlight the waiting times to reach reasonable grounds decisions and access to appropriate support and protection, including for those who have been forced to commit criminal offences by their perpetrators. [Read the analysis in full.](#)

### **Kalayaan: The National Referral Mechanism: Near Breaking Point – Progress Report 2024**

Kalayaan, a charity that works for justice for migrant domestic workers, produced its second report on the NRM, the challenges faced by First Responder Organisations and delays to the provision of support for those given a positive Reasonable Grounds decision. Read the [summary and full report.](#)

### **NRPF Network: Domestic abuse concession extended to more groups**

On 16 February 2024, the Home Office opened up access to the Migrant Victims of Domestic Abuse Concession (MVDAC) to victims of domestic abuse who have leave to enter or remain as the partner of a worker, student or graduate.

The concession, previously known as the Destitution Domestic Violence Concession (DDVC), enables people who have leave to enter or remain as a partner on certain immigration routes, to gain access to public funds for 3 months following a relationship breakdown with their partner due to domestic abuse. As most people with leave on a partner route have NRPF, the MVDAC provides an essential means of accessing benefits and local authority housing assistance, when a victim of domestic abuse would otherwise be left without accommodation or funds to meet their basic living needs following separation from their partner. [Read more.](#)

### **Hong Kongers with British National (Overseas) (BNO) visas face obstacles accessing higher education**

High international fees are prohibitive for many Hong Kongers with BNO visas, according to a [report from Hong Kong Watch](#). Hong Kong Watch is calling on the UK government to follow the lead of the Scottish government and grant home fees status for BNO visa holders, who have been in the UK for three years and have leave to remain.

### **Right to Remain: Guide on Work Exploitation and Migrant Workers' Rights**

In January 2024, Right to Remain published a guide on the risk of work exploitation to people with insecure immigration status or NRPF, highlighting migrant workers' rights and how to seek help. Read the [summary and access the full guidance.](#)

### **Children and Families Across Borders (CFAB): Cultural Family Life Library**

CFAB, an organisation which works to ensure the protection and support of separated children, has launched a series of guides for social workers on the culture of diaspora communities in the UK, to inform practice and avoid

risk to children. At present guides for families of Romanian heritage and Jamaican heritage are available, with more to come. Access the [guides here](#).

### Services provided by the P.H.O.E.B.E Centre, Ipswich

The P.H.O.E.B.E Centre works to increase low self-esteem and promote body confidence in young girls across Suffolk, with a significant programme for BME women, refugees and asylum seekers. Services include:

- Integration support, surgeries for applying for welfare benefits, GP registration, and ESOL;
- Food bank;
- Leadership courses for Black girls and women;
- Support for migrant victims of domestic abuse; and
- Support for Black pregnant women, mothers and babies.

See the [full list of programmes](#).

### NHS: Measles, Mumps and Rubella vaccines

The NHS reminds support services to ensure children and babies are vaccinated against MMR. NHS Nottingham has [guidance and posters](#) translated into common refugee and asylum seeker community languages, including details of the vaccines' ingredients. Patients are able to request the vaccine that does not contain pork gelatine.

### Exploring Diverse Migrant Stories: The Voices of Lancashire Podcast Series

The International Migration Research Network (IMISCOE) has released a podcast series featuring interviews with migrants in Lancashire, exploring their reasons for coming to the UK and their contribution to their local communities. Available on all podcast apps. [Read more](#).

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## Research

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### NRPF Network: Cost to councils of supporting people with NRPF rises to £77.6 million

Latest research from the NRPF Network has found that in 2022-23 the costs to social care services of providing support to individuals and households under NRPF conditions increased by 22% to £77.6 million. Recommendations for councils include the need to prioritise funding and support for those with NRPF; recommendations for central government include providing grant funding to councils to reduce pressures, long-term ambitions to rehaul immigration policies and abolish the use of NRPF conditions. Read the [report](#) in full.

### Migration Yorkshire: Introduction to Everyday Co-living through Homes for Ukraine scheme

Migration Yorkshire has published [research on co-living](#) experienced by hosts and guests under the Homes for Ukraine scheme, to "explore the expectations and motivations behind the hosting practice; and to examine how hospitality and the practice of welcome shape the processes of one's settling in a new country."

### From exploitation risks to mitigations: looking back locally on the implementation of the UK's Ukraine Schemes

This report produced by Focus on Labour Exploitation (FLEX) and University College London (UCL) looks at the implementation of the UK's Ukraine humanitarian visa schemes, with a focus on issues encountered around exploitation of displaced Ukrainians. The report provides policy recommendations for reducing immigration insecurity and improving responses to situations of trafficking and exploitation among displaced Ukrainians in the UK. Read the [Executive Summary and Full Report](#).

### Migrant workers at greater risk of modern slavery after Brexit

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A research project funded through the Modern Slavery and Human Rights Policy and Evidence Centre (Modern Slavery PEC) found labour shortages as a result of Brexit have put migrant workers at a greater risk of modern slavery and exploitation. The conditions attached to agricultural workers' visas, including time-limitations and their 'tied' nature places them in precarious situations and risk of exploitation. "Workers [...] faced significant issues of debt and deductions from wages because of illegal recruitment fees as well as costs incurred from travel, training, accommodation and high visa charges, researchers found. They also described deception by intermediaries, who misled workers about the conditions and length of employment they could expect." [Read the article in full.](#)

### **Humanitarian visas in a hostile environment**

The research project [MIGZEN](#), which is exploring the long-term impacts of Brexit on migration to and from the UK, has published a comparative analysis of the different visa schemes for Hong Kongers and Ukrainians. It draws on interviews to understand and compare the perceptions and realities of these schemes on individuals' access to services, their everyday lives and future plans. Read the [brief in full.](#)

### **The Migration Observatory: Migrants in the UK Labour Market**

The Migration Observatory at the University of Oxford has published its briefing on the labour market integration of migrants, the jobs they occupy, employment and unemployment rates, contract types and earnings. The data is presented in an interactive format and can serve as a useful evidence-base for policymaking and project or funding proposals. Read the [briefing and explore the data.](#)

The Migration Observatory also published a commentary on the rate of international students switching to work visas under the [Graduate Route](#) and the impact this has had on total net migration, which is found to be minimal. The data analyses the top occupations of international graduates and their earnings, which suggest that international graduates are significantly over-qualified for the roles they occupy. Read the [commentary and data in full.](#)

### **The Mental Health Foundation: The Mental Health of Asylum Seekers and Refugees in the UK**

In February 2024 the Mental Health Foundation published its [findings and recommendations](#) for trauma-informed and person-centred approaches to asylum in the UK, drawing on evidence from people with lived experience, asylum support organisations and practitioners.

### **Childcare for Migrant Parents: Childcare for All, call for interviewees**

Praxis, a migrant and refugee support organisation, has launched a new research project aiming to better understand migrant parents' access to early years education and childcare - particularly those who are affected by NRPF restrictions. This forms part of Praxis' wider [Childcare For All campaign](#), which is calling for a childcare system that is truly universal and open to every family living in the UK, regardless of their immigration status. To read more and express interest in taking part in an interview click [here.](#)

### **Forced Migration Review: call for submissions**

FMR, a publication from the Refugee Studies Centre at Oxford University, is seeking expressions of interest to submit articles from practitioners, policymakers and academics. Submission [guidelines](#) are available here. FMR is not an academic journal and thus seeks articles which are oriented towards policy and practice.

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## **Events and Training**

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**Online Training: When and how to undertake a human rights assessments for care leavers**

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The NRPF Network will deliver online training on when and how to carry out a human rights assessment to determine whether leaving care support may continue to be provided to a young asylum seeker who is age 18+ and is Appeal Rights Exhausted (ARE).

**DATE:** 9 May 2024

**LOCATION:** Online

Read the [course outline and pay for a space.](#)

### **Online training: Introduction to support options for people with NRPF**

The NRPF Network will deliver online training on how to identify correct signposting options and referral routes for people at risk of homelessness when they are under NRPF conditions.

**DATE:** 15 May 2024

**LOCATION:** Online

Read the [course outline and pay for a space.](#)

### **In person event: Creating Stable Futures: Implementing a Positive Outcomes Framework**

The Helena Kennedy Centre and ECPAT UK are hosting a Regional Learning Event (London & the East of England): "Creating Stable Futures: Implementing a Positive Outcomes Framework for Children and Young People who have Experienced Human Trafficking." This free event aims to provide a comprehensive exploration of strategies and tools to support frontline practitioners and managers in developing effective services for young people affected by human trafficking, modern slavery, and exploitation.

**DATE:** 23rd May, 9:30-17:00

**LOCATION:** Doughty Street Chambers, 54 Doughty St, London WC1N 2LS

Read the [full event description and register.](#)

### **Online training: Social services support for families with NRPF**

The NRPF Network will deliver *virtual* training on how to respond to requests for accommodation and financial support from families who are unable to access benefits and housing assistance due to their immigration status.

**DATE:** 19 June 2024

**LOCATION:** Online

Read the [course outline and pay for a space.](#)

### **In-person conference: Building Bridges Conference**

Migrant Help's Building Bridges Conference will bring together partners to share knowledge and collaborate on helping people seeking asylum thrive and recover from trauma. There will be two opportunities for organisations to showcase their work:

- Lightning Talks - five-minute mini-presentations on successful partnership working followed by an audience Q&A.
- Exhibition stalls.

**DATE:** 2 July 2024

**LOCATION:** Friends' House, Euston, London



If you are interested in either of these opportunities email [events@migranhelpuk.org](mailto:events@migranhelpuk.org) no later than Friday 26 April. Highlights from last year's conference are on [YouTube](#). Tickets for attendees will be available in early May.

### Online training: Social services' support for adults with NRPF

The NRPF Network will deliver *virtual* training on responding to the care and support needs of adults under NRPF conditions.

**DATE:** 3 July 2024

**LOCATION:** Online

Read the [course outline and pay for a space](#).

### Online Free Movement Law Courses

Free Movement offer a vast selection of online CPD modules relating to migration law. Whilst the majority provided are general in nature and do not qualify participants to advise on immigration law, Free Movement do deliver specific OISC preparation courses, including mock-exam practice, which can lead to accreditation after passing the relevant examination at OISC Levels 1, 2 or 3 – a legal requirement for immigration law advisers. [Read more and sign up](#).

### CFAB training for social workers in child protection

CFAB makes its lectures and 'lunch and learn' sessions available on [YouTube](#). These cover topics such as cultural heritage, placing children with families and child protection.

### Stand Up! Speak Out! 2024 – training series by members of Solidarity Knows No Borders (SKNB)

SKNB, a community of migrant justice organisations working together to achieve dignity and justice for migrants including refugees, is delivering online training session between April and June 2024, covering advocacy, legal issues, safeguarding and welfare to help inform practitioners' work. [View the event listings and sign-up](#).

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## Funding

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### Paul Hamlyn Foundation - Shared Ground Fund

The Shared Ground Fund supports long-term objectives to influence migration system reform, improve access to services, strengthen civic participation and inform public understanding through countering inaccurate narratives on migration. Whilst the Paul Hamlyn Foundation has paused new applications until later in Spring 2024, anyone interested in speaking to the Fund Managers about a potential funding request can do so by filling in [the form here](#).

### Funding Sites to check

Recipients of this bulletin are advised to regularly check sites such as [Grants Admin](#), which lists many available funds, the [Barrow Cadbury Trust](#) who take requests *on spec*, the [Paul Hamlyn Foundation](#), who also take requests *on spec*, and the [Blue Thread](#).

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## Jobs

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### Applications requested for the NRPF Partnership Steering Group

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The NRPF Partnership is now looking for people to join the Steering Group to help amplify their work and influence NRPF policies. The Steering Group will set the vision, values, aims and objectives of the partnership, decide on activities, and shape the governance model, among other key responsibilities.

**Closing date:** 29 April at 10 am

**Duration:** 18 months

**Remuneration:** Remuneration is available to successful applicants for their time and commitment, either to their existing employer or on an individual basis

Download the [information pack and application instructions](#).

### **Breaking Barriers: Chair of the Board of Trustees**

Breaking Barriers, which works with employers and partners to support refugees into meaningful employment, is currently advertising for the role of Chair of the Board of Trustees

**Closing date:** 2 May 2024

**Remuneration:** Voluntary, no expenses paid, commitment of 2-3 days a month)

[Read the job description and apply.](#)

### **Suffolk Refugee Support: Afghan Resettlement Programme Advice Worker**

The successful candidate will provide support and advice to families and individuals arriving in Suffolk through the UK's Afghan Resettlement Programmes. They will be responsible for helping vulnerable people fully integrate into their new community by providing a range of support and advice including setting up welfare benefits and managing finances; securing school places and English classes; accessing health services; encouraging and supporting leisure activities; engaging in social groups, volunteering, and training opportunities; and signposting for employment development.

**Hours:** 28 hours per week

**Salary:** £21,191 per year (pro rata from £26,489 FTE)

**Deadline:** 8th May at 12:00 (midday)

**Interview date:** 15th May

[Read the job description and apply.](#)

### **A.S. Hornby Educational Trust: 2024 Scholarship for Teachers of English as a Second Language to Refugees**

The A.S. Hornby Educational Trust is inviting applications from experienced teachers of English who are now working with refugee communities in the UK. The successful applicant will join a group of Hornby scholars from a range of different countries to study on a one-year Master's in TESOL at the University of Exeter, in the academic year 2024/25. This is a dedicated scholarship for the teaching of English as a second language to refugees. They are therefore inviting applications from teachers who are themselves refugees or have had previous experience of holding refugee status.

**Deadline:** 20 May 2024

To find out more information and to download an application form click [here](#).

### **Call for volunteers – Herts Welcomes Refugees**

Herts Welcomes Refugees are seeking volunteers to fill the following roles:

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- Befrienders (providing a range of help such as welcoming people to the area and explaining correspondence written in English);
- ESOL teachers or those that can help with languages; and
- People to help with providing activities and support in hotels.

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

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