

REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS PRESS PACK

MAY 2001



Source: *Refugees Magazine*

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

General Information2
Definitions5
Myths and Realities6
Government Legislation	.....11
Wales	.....15
Numbers	.....17
Country Information	.....25
Vouchers	.....28
Detention	.....30
Media and Attitudes	.....40
Racism in Wales	.....41
Websites	.....42
Contacts	.....44

GENERAL INFORMATION

Why people seek asylum from different countries?

People flee from their homes and become refugees for many different reasons, such as war between countries, civil war, persecution of minority ethnic groups or religious groups, or of members of political organisations. People are also persecuted because they belong to a distinct social group, such as gay men and lesbians. In some countries, women who refuse to conform to the dress code in their country are targeted.

(source: Refugee Council)

Where does the refugee definition come from?

International treaties Britain belongs to

- The Geneva Convention of 1951 and New York Protocol of 1967
- The Immigration Acts
 - comprising Immigration Act 1971, Immigration Act 1988, Asylum and Immigration Appeals Act 1993, Asylum and Immigration Act 1996, Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 as well as Immigration (Carriers' Liability) Act 1987; The Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Numerous pieces of secondary legislation, and especially the Immigration Rules contained in Statement of Changes in Immigration Rules (HC 395) of 23 May 1994 as amended by Statement of Changes in Immigration Rules (CM 3365) of August 1996
- The Asylum Appeals (Procedure) Rules of 1996
- The Dublin Convention

(source: <www.english.drc.dk/reading/publications/>)

What are the criteria that refugees have to meet?

The refugee definition is very strict, and asylum seekers have to prove that they meet all of the following criteria in order to be given refugee status. They must;

- Be outside their country of origin, or outside the country where they usually live; be at genuine risk and in fear of serious harm;
- Prove their own government does not want or is failing to protect them from harm;
- Prove that their fear is linked to their civil, political, or social status (for example, they are being persecuted by the state because they are affiliated to an opposition political party, or because they are of different ethnic origin)
- Need and deserve protection

History in Wales

In 1956 refugees from Hungary's revolution were housed throughout Wales, similarly Ugandans, Somalis and Vietnamese refugees were housed throughout Wales in the 1970s and 1980s. Wales' ethnic minority communities have a long history; both the Somali and Chinese community have lived in Wales for over 100 years.

Famous Refugees in Britain

Joseph Conrad, author of Heart of Darkness, was a refugee.

Ursula Owen, co-founder of the Virago Press, was a child refugee.

Karl Marx, political theorist and author of The Communist Manifesto, was a refugee.

Alec Isigonis, designer of the Mini, was a refugee.

Carl Djerassi, inventor of the contraceptive pill, was a refugee.

Rashmi Thakar, producer of Tilda rice, was a refugee.

(Source: Refugee Council)

DEFINITIONS

Who is a refugee?

A refugee is someone who has fled, or who is unable to return to, their country due to fear of persecution. Many refugees will experience persecution or torture before they are able to leave their countries.

How is the right to asylum determined?

Asylum seekers are granted residency in Britain if they meet the 1951 UN Convention's definition of a refugee. The United Kingdom is a signatory to the 1951 United Nations Convention that defines a 'refugee' as someone who:

'owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it'.

Nations such as the UK, which have signed the UN's 1951 convention and 1967 protocol, are obliged to receive and formally recognise those fleeing persecution if they meet one of the above five UN criteria.

Many refugees will be unable to obtain correct passports, visas and other papers prior to flight and entry into the country of asylum. They may be unable to seek passports and papers from their national authorities or visas from the UK or other authorities. Indeed there is not a visa available for entry as a refugee into the UK. The Convention specifically states that signatory states should not penalise a refugee for illegal entry or presence in the country of asylum.

Asylum Seekers: Whilst a person's application for refugee status is being considered by the Government, they are known as an asylum seeker.

Refugee: a person granted refugee status by the government of the new country. The government has decided that they meet the definition of a refugee under the 1951 United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees. The term "refugee" refers to recognised refugees granted indefinite leave to remain within the terms of the 1951 Convention on the Status of Refugees, or those given four years exceptional leave to remain as persons in need of protection.

For further information:

1. United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR)
<www.unhcr.ch>

Welsh contacts:

United Nations Association (029 20228 549)
Oxfam (029 20757067)
Amnesty International (Tim Lockhart: 029 20465 378)

MYTHS AND REALITIES

1. Britain is a soft touch and takes more than its fair share of refugees.

According to recent United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees figures, the UK received a *total* of 76,040 applications for asylum in 2000; this represents a 7% increase on 1999. However, *relative to population* many other European countries take far more asylum seekers than we do per head - Britain is 7th out of 15 EU member states in these terms, with 1.66 applications per 1000 people. Belgium was highest (4.20 per 1000), with Ireland, the Netherlands, Austria, Denmark and Sweden, all receiving more applications relative to the population of their country¹.

Moreover, It is primarily the poor countries in the South which bear the brunt of refugee movements. For example, there are around 1.8 million refugees in Iran, more than 450 000 in Guinea and over 400,000 in Tanzania². On a more global note, according to World Refugee Survey 2000, in 1999 nearly 7 million people in 24 countries were forced to flee wars, repression and other forms of persecution, making the world refugee population total rise for the first time in 7 years. At the beginning of the Millennium 35 million people were uprooted.

2. Only a tiny proportion of refugees are genuine and the rest are 'bogus'

The majority of people coming to the UK to seek asylum in recent years have been from the former Yugoslavia, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, Turkey, Iraq and Iran. These are all countries where there has been serious conflict or where grave human rights abuses are common³.

Around 47% of asylum seekers were found to be in need of protection and allowed to remain during 1999, and around 22% during 2000. However, this ignores the fact that many refusals are overturned at appeal; in 2000, appeal adjudicators upheld 17% of appeals before them⁴.

Furthermore, the past year has seen a dramatic rise in rejections based on technicalities – up from 1,085 in 1999 to 26,635 in 2000. This is because asylum seekers have only been given 10 working days to submit a 19 page 'Statement of Evidence form', in which they must outline the basis of their claim. Often without legal help and lacking sufficient English to complete the form properly, their applications are frequently refused on the grounds of 'non-compliance'. In such cases, the validity of their actual claim is therefore not even considered⁵. Most asylum seekers are refused not because their cases are bogus, but because they travelled through other countries on their way to Britain or because of lack of information and good legal advice. In addition to that, in 2000, on average 24% of asylum seekers

¹ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, (2001), Asylum Applications Submitted in Europe 2000.

² U.S. Committee for Refugees, World Refugee Survey 2000.

³ www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs/asy-dec00.pdf

⁴ See note 3

⁵ If one removes those refused on grounds of non-compliance from the total number of asylum applications for 2000, 44% of asylum seekers were found to be in need of protection and allowed to remain in 2000 and even more after appeal.

were refused because they did not fill in or submit their complex statement of evidence form (SEF) within 10 working days of their arrival.

The 20 page long form must be completed in English and supporting evidence must be translated. In 1999 1,085 applications were refused on non-compliance grounds, in 2000 this figure was 23,795 which represent an increase of 2093% in 2000. These refusals will obviously be taken for an appeal and many will result in granting protection. On this basis, there is no justification for routinely attaching the adjective 'bogus' to all those seeking asylum, which does tremendous harm to those legitimately seeking asylum.

3. Refugees who come to the UK using false documents are bogus

For many refugees fleeing persecution or death, a false travel document is the only means of escape. Often governments refuse to issue passports to known political dissidents - or imprison them if they apply. The fact that asylum seekers use false travel documents tells us nothing about whether the person is a refugee or not.

Because refugees often cannot obtain all the necessary papers, article 31 of the 1951 Geneva Convention prohibits governments from penalising refugees who use false documents. Most governments, including the UK, require travellers to have visas, creating an enormous obstacle for refugees trying to escape persecution. The more governments put up measures to stop people travelling to their territory, the more refugees are forced to use false documents and turn to smugglers to help them escape.

4. Most asylums seekers are 'economic migrants'

There are clear connections between increases in incidence of human rights abuses and persecution in particular countries and rises in the numbers of asylum applicants from those countries. On the basis of the figures above, large numbers of applications have legitimate grounds for claiming asylum.

It is important, however, to acknowledge that migration is increasing. Given that there are virtually no legal routes for migrants to come to the UK to work, some clearly do seek to claim asylum to gain entry to the UK. To reduce this pressure on the asylum system, it is essential that the Government should develop a more open policy towards migration, as recently recommended in a Home Office report⁶.

The evidence is growing that the immigration of workers – not only skilled but also unskilled – does not reduce the welfare of British citizens. On the contrary, it stimulates the economy and thus the growth and incomes of the indigenous population. Indeed, given ageing and an increasingly service-orientated economy, the welfare of the population, especially the elderly, depends on increased unskilled immigration. Furthermore, the evidence suggests that the vast majority of migrants do not wish to settle in the UK, but to work here temporarily in order to send money home to their families.

5. Asylum seekers get massive state handouts

⁶ Glover, S, et al, (2001), Migration: an economic and social analysis, Home Office

This is the most common allegation against asylum seekers and refugees. Apart from being false, this statement is utterly offensive and racist. The belief that people claim asylum in the UK so they can live on benefits 30% below those considered good enough for UK citizens is laughable. It implies that they do not deserve better because of who they are and where they are from, and that 'our' poverty is too good for them. Asylum seekers are entitled only to the equivalent of 70% of Income Support and even this in the form of humiliating vouchers. A single adult gets £36.54 in vouchers a week and just £10 of that amount can be converted to cash. In addition, asylum seekers are not allowed to apply for work for the first six months after their arrival and if they are waiting for an appeal, they are prohibited from working.

The Government has argued that vouchers would deter unfounded claims, however since the scheme was established, asylum applications have continued to rise. As the United Nations High Commission for Refugees has recently argued, the main reason for lodging an asylum claim in a particular country is not the level of benefit support available, but the presence of established refugee communities (eg. Sri Lankans in the UK).

6. Asylum-seekers are taking our housing

Asylum-seekers are primarily being housed in 'hard to let' accommodation that people on council waiting lists don't want. Dispersal under the existing interim arrangements is happening far more slowly than originally envisaged by the Government; this is evidence of the poor state of the housing stock in many areas and the fact that appropriate accommodation is simply not available. A recent report by Shelter ('Far from home')⁷ has provided further detail on the very low standard of housing available to asylum seekers in the private rented sector.

7. Asylum seekers don't need to put themselves into the hands of traffickers

Trafficking has risen in recent years, but the increasingly restrictive approaches of Western Governments, including the UK (e.g. the introduction of visa restrictions and carrier sanctions; the application of 'safe third country' and 'safe country of origin' concepts; readmission agreements) are pushing asylum seekers into the hands of traffickers.

Trafficking in human beings cannot be condoned, and the Government should take action to curb it, however it must recognise the impact of its own immigration and asylum policies in compounding the problem. It is essential that any measures are directed at the individuals and groups making profits out of desperate human needs, and not their victims. There is a significant danger that measures to combat trafficking may prevent genuine asylum seekers from gaining access to asylum procedures.

8. Council tax is going up to fund asylum seekers

The costs of looking after asylum seekers are currently meant to be met by central government rather than through council tax; this basic principle should ensure that the costs do not fall disproportionately on particular authorities.

⁷ Garvie, D, (2001), far from home, Shelter

The Government's own report for 1999 -2000 shows that the cost of supporting asylum seekers, including legal aid, welfare benefits, housing, health and education was £597 million or £10.15 per head of population per year or 0.17% of total Government spending (Hansard, 12 April 2000, 227W). Indeed, this is how Tony Blair, Prime Minister answered the question about the cost in House of Commons: "Let me give the House the facts. The total cost of asylum is less than one fifth of 1 per cent of Government spending."

A major reason why support for asylum seekers is proving more expensive is because cases are taking so long to process; the average time of 19 months is far in excess of the Government's stated aim (for families) of two months plus four months for any appeal. When the Labour Government came to power in May 1997 there was a backlog of some 50,000 outstanding asylum cases, but in January 2000 the overall backlog had risen to 102,870 before falling back⁸ to 66,195 at the end of December 2000⁹. This is largely the fault of the Home Office (e.g. the failure of recently introduced computer systems failure; the introduction of new casework arrangements; insufficient staffing; poor quality decision-making).

9. Asylum-seekers should be locked up because they're criminals

The majority of asylum-seekers are granted temporary admission pending an outcome of their claim. However, many asylum-seekers are held in detention whilst their claim is processed. At the end of December 2000 there were 1195 immigration detainees held in prisons and detention centres throughout the U.K.¹⁰. They are detained at some 30 detention centres and prisons around the country. In breach of international human rights law, there is no adequate judicial oversight of the decision to detain and it appears that detention is being used routinely rather than in exceptional circumstances only. In March 2000 a detention centre for newly arrived asylum seekers was opened in a former army barracks at Oakington in Cambridgeshire, and further expansion of accommodation places is planned. There is significant concern that they are being held at Oakington on the basis of their country of origin alone, echoing the much criticised 'white list' procedures operated by the previous government (subsequently abolished by the 1999 Immigration and Asylum Act). They will also have their claims determined within 7 days – far too little time to ensure a fair and thorough examination of their cases.

10. Politicians and the press are simply stating the facts

The Press Complaints Commission has recently cautioned editors about 'the danger that inaccurate and misleading reporting may generate an atmosphere of fear and hostility which is not borne out by the facts'. This statement is drawn from a ruling to uphold a complaint by Harman and Harman solicitors in Kent against an article in the Folkestone Herald. More recently, the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) has expressed its concern at the 'ill-informed, adverse media coverage' which has contributed to a rise in racial tension in local communities. In a report on policing issues around asylum, ACPO concluded that: 'Racist expressions towards asylum

⁸ www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs/asy-jan00.pdf

⁹ www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs/asy-dec00.pdf

¹⁰ www.penlex.org.uk/pages/avebury3.html

seekers appear to have become common currency and acceptable in a way which would never be tolerated towards any other minority'¹¹.

Unfortunately, some politicians have on occasion also helped to entrench some of the myths set out above. In 1999, the leaders of all the main UK political parties supported an 'All Party Declaration' on the Asylum Bill which states that 'the right to free political expression must not be abused in pursuit of political advantage by inciting or exploiting prejudice on the grounds of race, nationality or religion'. Political parties must uphold this principle in their public statements on asylum issues.

11. The Asylum System is in shambles

Asylum system is a shambles, but to blame asylum seekers for that would be as to blame all those who are ill and injured for the problems of NHS. The government is now facing a backlog of more than 60,000 claims. It is spending additional money, time and resources to keep asylum seekers isolated, excluded and poor in order to score cheap political points. Asylum seekers are presumed guilty and it is almost impossible for them to prove their innocence. In the process they are humiliated with vouchers and degraded through dispersal.

12. The 1951 UN Convention is out of date

As a party to the 1951 United Nations Refugee Convention, ratified by 139 countries, the UK has an obligation to examine applications for asylum. If an asylum-seeker can demonstrate a 'well founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion', then they should be given refugee status. There is a duty on the UK to ensure that, through its actions, no-one is forcibly returned to any territory where their life or freedom may be in danger.

The Home Secretary's recent proposal that those seeking asylum should remain in the first country they flee to is fundamentally flawed. This would shift even more responsibility on some of the world's poorest countries who already host an unfair proportion of the world's refugees; the vast majority already remain in the developing world, whilst the EU hosts less than 5%. It would also undermine the individual's absolute right to make a claim for asylum in Europe and to have it properly considered.

(Source: Oxfam, National Coalition of Anti-Deportation Campaigns)

¹¹ www.guardian.co.uk/Archive/Article/0,4273,4121943,00.html

GOVERNMENT LEGISLATION

The 1999 Immigration Act brought about a number of changes. The NASS (National Asylum Support Service) was set up by the Home Office to deal with asylum seekers: to provide accommodation and financial support for asylum seekers who are awaiting a decision from Immigration. The Act removed asylum seekers entitlement to support from the Benefits Agency. Instead asylum seekers receive food vouchers and a maximum of £10 in cash per adult per week from NASS. The total amount is equal to 70% of the Income Support rate. Asylum seekers are not permitted to work during the first six months they are in the UK.

	£ per week (including cash allowance)
Qualifying couple	£57.37
Lone parent aged 18 or over	£36.54
Single person aged 25 or over	£36.54
Single person aged at least 18 but under 25	£28.95
Person aged at least 16 under 18 (except a member of a qualifying couple)	£31.75
Person aged under 19	£26.60

To deal with asylum on a national level the Immigration Act introduced the dispersal system. If asylum seekers request accommodation, then they are offered NASS accommodation outside London and South East England. They have no choice about the area to which they will be dispersed. NASS has created 12 regions in the UK for the dispersal of asylum seekers. Wales is one of these regions.

In Wales, NASS accommodation will be found in three ways:

- 1) Welsh local Authorities Consortium
- 2) City and County of Cardiff
- 3) Private Accommodation

What first happens when an asylum seeker lands in Britain?

The government's new immigration and asylum act, which came into force on April 1, makes it nearly impossible for a genuine refugee to reach Britain legally.

Anyone who carries an asylum seeker into Britain is liable to a £2,000 fine. In 1998, 1,000 migrants were thrown overboard and drowned at sea by European ship crews anxious to escape punishment for harbouring illegal immigrants. If a person seeking asylum actually reaches a British port, he or she can make a verbal application for asylum to immigration officials. Depending on the availability of an interpreter, the applicant is interviewed about their history of persecution. Asylum seekers are given five days to collect evidence to substantiate their claim following their first interview. "As the nature of any asylum application is complex and the determination procedure complicated, it is imperative that asylum seekers seek competent and specialist legal advice," says the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants.

This can prove daunting for asylum seekers who do not speak English or have friends and family in the country. The lord chancellor recently announced an extra £23m to provide more and better legal advice to asylum seekers.

The application is then sent to the Home Office's immigration and nationality directorate for a decision. If the asylum seeker is refused asylum he or she can appeal. Immigration officials first consider any grounds of appeal they receive from the claimant. The presenting officers' unit then reviews the file and the appeal is heard. If a point of law arises, the case might be referred to the immigration appeals tribunal. If the asylum seeker is still refused he or she is deported.

Where do asylum seekers go when they reach Britain?

If asylum seekers are not immediately deported, they are fingerprinted and released on "temporary admission". The immigration and asylum act forcibly disperses asylum seekers around the country to prevent concentrations overloading local services, as Kent council has claimed.

What do they live on?

Under the government's immigration and asylum act, asylum seekers are given the equivalent of £35 for a single person or £104 for a family of four, which is considerably less than the benefits available to British citizens. Of the £35, £10 is given in cash as "pocket money"; the rest is given in the form of food vouchers.

This controversial new system, administered privately by the US firm Sodexo, means that asylum seekers can only buy food in certain supermarkets, which may not be as cheap as street markets.

Jack Straw has also instructed participating shops not to give change for the vouchers. The home secretary says he is aiming to keep down the cost of asylum seekers, but estimates suggest that the cashless system could cost three times as much to administer as a more straightforward benefits set-up.

How long does this process take?

The new immigration and asylum act says that most cases will be decided within six months by April 2001. But many asylum seekers wait for as long as 18 months for their cases to be decided. A backlog of 102,870 people seeking asylum is steadily growing. In December, 7,180 new applications were received, with just 2,320 asylum decisions made.

Why?

Sheer numbers are rising. Last year, there were 71,160 asylum seekers, compared with 46,015 in 1998. But botched administration must take much of the blame. The home secretary has blamed the computer company Siemens for a chaotic installation of a new computerised administrative system for the asylum procedure.

Why the urgency?

In his leaked memo, Tony Blair identified asylum as one of the two "touchstone issues" on which the government was seen as being too "soft". A botched computerisation project and an ill-timed move of the immigration and nationality directorate's headquarters led to a massive bureaucratic breakdown. At one point, the number of decisions taken each month fell to 800 and the backlog soared from 50,960 in February 1998 to a peak of 104,000 earlier this year.

(Source: Guardian, see
<www.guardianunlimited.co.uk/Refugees_in_Britain/0,2759,180745,00.html>)

UK REFUGEE INTEGRATION STRATEGY

"Full and Equal Citizens" spells out how the Government and communities can work together to ensure that refugees can play their full part in the economic and cultural life of this country. Specifically the document outlines how the Government will:

- encourage local community programmes to support refugees
- promote employment by raising awareness among New Deal advisers and the professions of the problems facing refugees
- improve access to suitable English language tuition and other training
- help ensure that health care meets refugees' special needs
- help refugees find adequate housing

"Full and Equal Citizens: A Strategy for the Integration of Refugees into the UK"
available <www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk/default.asp?pageid=90>

IMMIGRATION AND ASYLUM BILL 1999

All-Party Declaration on Principles of Good Practice for the Debate

We support the call by the Commission for Racial Equality, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the Refugee Council that the UK, in accordance with its international obligations and its traditions of civil and political liberties, must continue to provide protection to those who have a well-founded fear of persecution.

These are important issues and so the debates which take place in Parliament and elsewhere during the passage of the Immigration and Asylum Bill 1999 should be vigorous. However, the right to free political expression must not be abused in pursuit of political advantage by inciting or exploiting prejudice on the grounds of race, nationality or religion.

We, as leaders of the Parliamentary parties in England, Scotland and Wales, agree that all MPs, MEPs, councillors and officials of our respective parties should undertake:

- Not to publish, cause to be published, or in any way endorse any material which incites hostility or division between people of different racial, national or religious groups, or which might reasonably be expected to stir up or incite such hostility or division.
- To ensure that in any dealings with the public no words or actions are used which may stir up racial or religious hatred, or lead to prejudice on grounds of race, nationality or religion.
-

We call upon all others who are in any way involved in the passage or reportage of the Immigration and Asylum Bill, especially the media, to do the same.

Rt Hon Paddy Ashdown MP Rt Hon Tony Blair MP

Rt Hon William Hague MP Alex Salmond MP

Dafydd Wigley MP

For further information:

<www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk/> (Home Office website)
<www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk/> (Scottish Refugee Council)
<www.immigrationindex.org>

Welsh contacts:

Welsh Refugee Council (029 20228 549)
Oxfam (029 20757067)
Cardiff Consortium (2087 3614)
Wales Consortium (01633 244491)
Tammy Speers/Terry Threadgold (20874041)

WALES

Structure of the Welsh Consortium

The Consortium is a joint arrangement between the participating Councils to discharge their functions under the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999. Its function is to provide and commission accommodation and other essential services for the asylum seekers and their dependants, placed in Wales under the terms of an agreement with NASS at the Home Office. Newport is the leading council for the Welsh Consortium, Cardiff is not a member of the Welsh local authorities Consortium and represents itself in meetings with the Home Office.

There are 4 dispersal areas in Wales:

- 1. South East Wales Lead Authority:** Newport
Other Members: Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Merthyr, Monmouthshire, Torfaen, Vale of Glamorgan, Rhondda Cynon Taff
- 2. South West Wales Lead Authority:** Swansea
Other Members: Powys, Bridgend, Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion, Neath Port Talbot, Pembrokeshire
- 3. North Wales Lead Authority:** Wrexham
Other Members: Anglesey, Conwy, Denbighshire, Flintshire, Gwynedd and North Powys
- 4. Cardiff**

4000 bed spaces to be provided in 3 years (reduced from original 5000 figure) this includes those housed by the Welsh Consortium and Cardiff Consortia and those housed in private accommodation

According to the Home Office the main language groups expected to be placed in Wales:

- | | | |
|-----------|-----------|-------------|
| • Arabic | • Bengali | • Mandarin |
| • Somali | • Kurdish | • Cantonese |
| • Turkish | • Punjabi | • Czech |
| • Farsi | • Urdu | • Hindi |

Cardiff, Newport and Swansea are expected to take a larger proportion of the asylum seekers because of the existence of established ethnic minority and refugee groups in those cities.

In addition there are groups of asylum seekers who have strong second languages for example; French, Portuguese or English. These groups might also be dispersed to Wales. Finally, if "new" groups with no previous connections begin to arrive, Wales would be expected to share in their support.

**All-Party Declaration on the Principles of Good Practice for the Dispersal of
Asylum Seekers January 2001**

We support the call by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees that in accordance with our international obligations and our traditions of political and civil liberties, we must continue to provide protection to those seeking asylum from persecution. We recognise that there are important issues surrounding the reception of asylum seekers in to local communities which must be debated in an open and objective manner. However, the right to free expression must not be abused in pursuit of political advantage by inciting or exploiting prejudice against asylum seekers.

We as leaders of the political parties in Wales agree that all Assembly Members, Members of Parliament, councillors and officials of our respective parties should undertake not to use or provoke any actions or words which may be detrimental to the process of reception and integration of asylum seekers into communities in Wales, of which may reasonably be expected to stir up or incite hostility against them. We are proud of the tradition that exists in Wales of being a welcoming and supportive country and we are sure that this approach will continue to apply in future.

We call upon all others who are involved in the implementation or reporting of reception of asylum seekers, including the media, to do so sensitively.

Alun Michael JP MP AM
Ieuan Wyn Jones AM

Nick Bourne AM
Michael German AM

For further information:

<www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk/> (Home Office website)

<www.immigrationindex.org>

Welsh contacts:

Welsh Refugee Council (029 20228 549)

Oxfam (029 20757067)

Cardiff Consortium (2087 3614)

Wales Consortium (01633 244491)

Tammy Speers/Terry Threadgold (20874041)

Marie Gillespie (01792 -205678 ext 4325)

NUMBERS

Provisional data provided by Governments to the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) indicate that asylum applications in 25 European countries in 2000, decreased by 4% compared to 1999. According to the World Refugee Survey 2000, nearly 7 million people in 24 countries were forced to flee wars, repression and other forms of persecution in 1999, making the total world refugee population rise for the first time in 7 years.

Equally, the situation in the UK is misrepresented. Asylum seekers constitute only 0.3% of population and are taking up less than one fifth of one percent of public expenditure (Hansard, 12 April 2000, 227W). Immigrants constitute around 4% of population and they contribute around 10% more to Government revenues than they receive in Government expenditure (Migration: an economic and social analysis by the RDS, (RDS Occasional Paper 67).

(Source: National Coalition of Anti-Deportation Campaigns)

Wales

Research by Dr. Vaughan Robinson at University of Wales, Swansea found that in 1997 approximately 3, 600 asylum seekers and refugees had made their home in Wales.

The Welsh Refugee Council service users consist of over 49 nationalities.

Britain

Top five countries from which Britain received asylum seekers in 2000 – Iraq, Sri Lanka, Iran, Afghanistan and Somalia.

The vast majority of refugees remain in the developing world, the EU hosts less than 5% and Britain less than 1%.

Despite increases in the numbers of people seeking asylum in Britain, relative to population Britain was only 10th out of 25 European countries taking asylum seekers in 2000.

A new UNHCR analysis of asylum applications made in Europe in the first six months of 2000 also provides compelling evidence that the main reason for lodging asylum applications in particular countries is the presence of established communities **not benefit rates**. For example, for January-June 2000:

- 96 % of all asylum applications made in Europe by people from Mali were in France
- 60% of all applications from Albania were lodged in Belgium
- 48% of Nigerians in Ireland
- 45% of Sri Lankans in the UK
- 33% of Bangladeshis in Hungary
- and 28% of Indians in Austria

ASYLUM APPLICATIONS 2000

The figures below set the numbers of asylum applications made in the UK in the context of those made in other EU countries, and also in relation to the populations of the host countries. The UK and EU applications are also set in the context of worldwide refugee and asylum statistics.

PLEASE NOTE:

- Figures for December 2000 were not available at time of compilation. Figures quoted for January –December 2000 are projections based on available statistics for previous months.
- Figures provided for UK asylum applications are for cases submitted, approximate actual applications, based on an average number of applicants per case, are provided in brackets.

EU ASYLUM APPLICATIONS January - December 2000

EU COUNTRY	ASYLUM APPLICATIONS
United Kingdom	70 635 (91 826)
Germany	78 764
Netherlands	43 892
Belgium	38 072
France	34 992
Austria	15 090
Sweden	11 713
Denmark	8 632
Ireland	7 267
Spain	5 839
Finland	2 833
Greece	2 299
Portugal	175
Luxembourg	444

ASYLUM APPLICATIONS PER 1000 OF POPULATION 2000

EU COUNTRY	POPULATION	ASYLUM APPLICATIONS	APPLICATIONS PER 1000 OF POPULATION
Belgium	8 131 111	15 090	3.72
Netherlands	15 892 237	43 892	2.76
Ireland	3 797 257	7 267	1.91
Austria	10 241 506	38 072	1.86
Denmark	5 336 394	8 632	1.62
United Kingdom	59 511 464	70 635 (91 826)	1.19 (1.54)
Sweden	8 873 052	11 713	1.32
Luxembourg	437 389	444	1.02
Germany	82 797 408	78 764	0.95
France	59 329 691	34 992	0.59
Finland	5 167 486	2 833	0.55
Greece	10 601 527	2 299	0.22
Portugal	10 048 232	175	0.17
Spain	39 996 671	5 839	0.15

INCREASE IN ASYLUM APPLICATIONS, EU COUNTRIES 1990-2000

EU COUNTRY	1990	2000	AVERAGE ANNUAL INCREASE (%)	AVERAGE ANNUAL DECREASE (%)
Ireland		7 267	36.43	
Belgium	13 000	38 072	17.77	
United Kingdom	5 300	70 636 (91 826)	11.34 (14.74)	
Finland	2 700	2 833	6.34	
Denmark	26 200	8 632	4.02	
Austria	22 800	15 090	0.41	
Spain	8 600	5 839	0.68	
Sweden	29 400	11 713		0.95
Netherlands	21 200	43 892		1.31
Luxembourg	54 800	444 34 992		2.02
France				
Portugal		175		2.67
Greece	6 200	2 299		3.13
Germany	193 100	78 764		3.18
Italy	4 800			6.24

**TOP HOST COUNTRIES WORLDWIDE, 1 JANUARY – 30 SEPTEMBER
2000**

COUNTRY	NEW ARRIVALS	REFUGEE POPULATION
Sudan	94 782	458 409
Congo	92 840	132 430
Pakistan	90 000	2 001 675
Tanzania	79 583	683 991

UK PERCENTAGE OF WORLD'S REFUGEES

WORLD REFUGEES	UK ASYLUM APPLICATIONS	PERCENTAGE
12 000 000	70 635 (91 826)	0.3% (0.4%)

UK PERCENTAGE OF WORLD'S ASYLUM SEEKERS

WORLD ASYLUM SEEKERS	UK ASYLUM APPLICATIONS	PERCENTAGE
1 200 000	70 635 (91 826)	5.9% (7.7%)

UK PERCENTAGE OF EU ASYLUM FIGURES 2000

EU ASYLUM APPLICATIONS	UK ASYLUM APPLICATIONS	PERCENTAGE
322 460	70 635 (91 826)	21.9% (28.5%)

Figures for Jan – Nov 2000

32% of *initial substantive decisions* on asylum claims resulted in asylum-seekers being granted leave to remain in the UK (15% Refugee Status and 17% Exceptional Leave to Remain).

In the same period, 17% of appeals before an Adjudicator were allowed. The Home Office gives no figures for those granted leave to remain after an initial refusal. Based on the experience of its own caseworkers and others working in the field, Asylum Aid estimates that at least as many people are allowed to remain on the basis of reconsideration of their cases by the Home Office (i.e. in cases c. to f. above) as win their appeals before an Adjudicator, therefore in this case, 17%.

In other words, an estimate for the proportion of refusals which were overturned is approximately one third.

(Source: Asylum Aid)

Note on Interpreting Home Office Statistics Jan-Nov 2000

Due to the way that statistics on outcomes of asylum claims are collected, the Home Office does not actually know how many asylum-seekers are granted leave to remain in the UK each year.

The statistics recorded by the Home Office for the outcome of asylum cases only relates to the first decision made on an asylum claim. They therefore do not include:

- a. Grants of refugee status following a successful appeal to an Adjudicator
- b. Grants of refugee status following a successful appeal to the Tribunal, High Court, Court of Appeal etc
- c. Home Office grants of ELR following recommendation of Adjudicator
- d. Grants of Leave (ELR or refugee status) following further representations
- e. Grants of refugee status following a concession of an appeal by the Home Office on the grounds that the initial refusal was wrong
- f. Successes in making fresh applications for asylum (for instance on the basis of new evidence) after the appeal has failed

The real number of asylum-seekers granted status in the UK is therefore considerably higher than given credit for by the Home Office statistics.

Although figures are given by the Home Office for the proportion of appeals won before Adjudicators, it is important to bear in mind that an appeal to an Adjudicator is only one of several ways in which a refusal of asylum may be successfully challenged: the others are set out above.

Another issue is that the Home Office calculates proportions of those granted Refugee Status or Exceptional Leave to Remains on the total number of decisions made, rather than on the total of *substantive* decisions made. The total therefore includes non-compliance decisions where the asylum-seeker was refused without their asylum case actually being considered.

On average 24% of asylum-seekers were refused on non-compliance Jan-Nov 2000 compared with 3% in 1999 (and in November 2000, the proportion was as high as 38%). This staggering increase (2093%) is largely due to the new onerous requirements on asylum-seekers to submit a Statement of Evidence Form (SEF) to the Home Office within 14 days of their arrival in the UK. If the asylum-seeker does not understand the form, submits the form late, or does not complete the form in English with all their supporting documents translated into English, then they are refused asylum on non-compliance grounds, without their case for seeking asylum from persecution even being considered. Many people are refused for non-compliance even after submitting the SEF, because of the inefficiency of the Home Office's administrative systems. All non-compliance refusals are more sensibly excluded from calculations of success rates, as their refusal has nothing at all to do with how strong their grounds for claiming asylum were.

It is also necessary to bear in mind that poor decision-making by Home Office officials and Adjudicators, combined with the absence of good legal advice, leave many people refused asylum who ought to qualify for it – the proportion of people

who should, under any fair system, get asylum is a significant majority. The fact that, even under the very negative conditions in which asylum seekers have to exist and put forward their claims, so many do win through, is nothing less than remarkable, and hardly consistent with the widespread view that a majority are making unfounded claims.

Below we try to estimate the actual number of asylum-seekers granted leave to remain in the UK for the year 2000, by extrapolating the statistics provided by the Home Office. While the Home Office continues to provide incomplete statistics of those allowed to stay in the UK after consideration of their asylum claim, such estimates remain the only way of gaining a complete picture of the number of successful asylum claims. It remains extraordinary that the Home Office do not collect complete statistics on the numbers of asylum-seekers who are successful in their asylum claim. Home Office policy and practice can only be properly informed through the collection of this basic statistical data.

As the following publications point out, reliable data on forced migration populations can be difficult to compile; at the same time, they are important for research, policy formation, and planning purposes.

- Jeff Crisp, "Who Has Counted the Refugees? UNHCR and the Politics of Numbers," *New Issues in Refugee Research*, Working Paper No. 12, June 1999 –

<www.unhcr.ch/refworld/pub/wpapers/wpno12.htm>

number of resources that attempt to meet the need for statistical data are available online; for example:

2000 IFRC World Disaster Report, Summary Data (CRED) -

<www.cred.be/emdat/images/wdr/wdr2000.htm>

- Disaster data presented in 16 tables from chapter 9 of the most recent World Disasters Report.

Asian Migration Atlas (Scalabrini Migration Center) -

<www.scalabrini.asn.au/atlas/amatlas.htm>

- Useful fact book organized by country; includes basic country data along with overviews of migration patterns.

Asylum Statistics (Inter-Governmental Consultations) -

<www.igc.ch/frstatistics.htm>

- Provides data for asylum applications filed in Europe, North America, and Australia, since 1992.

Global Overview (Global IDP Project) -

<www.idpproject.org/global_overview.htm>

- Table displaying summary data for the number of IDPs in the countries profiled in the global IDP database.

Statistics 2000 (U.S. Committee for Refugees) -

<www.refugees.org/world/statistics/wrs00_tableindex.htm>

Statistical tables from the 2000 edition of the World Refugee Survey.

Global Numbers

Ratio of Refugees to Host Country Population in Selected Countries
(Listed by Host Country, as of December 31, 1999)

Host Country	Ratio of Refugee Population to Total Population	Number of Refugees
Gaza Strip*	1 to 2	798,400
Jordan	1 to 3	1,518,000
West Bank	1 to 3	569,700
Lebanon	1 to 11	378,100
Guinea	1 to 17	453,000
Yugoslavia	1 to 22	476,000
Djibouti	1 to 26	23,000
Liberia	1 to 32	90,000
Iran	1 to 36	1,835,000
Zambia	1 to 47	205,000
Congo-Brazzaville	1 to 68	40,000
Tanzania	1 to 76	413,000
Sudan	1 to 80	363,000
Uganda	1 to 105	197,000
Pakistan	1 to 120	1,217,000
Saudi Arabia	1 to 163	128,600
Congo-Kinshasa	1 to 215	235,000
Germany	1 to 288	285,000
Thailand	1 to 390	158,400
Libya	1 to 427	11,000
United States	1 to 455	638,000
United Kingdom	1 to 530	112,000
Malaysia	1 to 568	45,400
Canada	1 to 577	53,000
Albania	1 to 700	5,000
Russian Federation	1 to 1,405	104,300
Indonesia	1 to 1,765	120,000
France	1 to 1,970	30,000
Turkey	1 to 7,242	9,100
Mexico	1 to 11,729	8,500
Japan	1 to 316,750	400

(Source: US Committee for Refugees)

WOMEN

It is estimated that the numbers of female asylum seekers making it to Europe is around 30%. The most quoted UNHCR statistic relating to gender is that women and their dependants constitute 80% of the world's refugees.

ROMA

In Canada 70% of Roma from Czech Republic are accepted as refugees whilst in the UK, over 99% are rejected. (source: Refugee Council) estimated 3 500 living in the UK

For further information:

Home Office Statistics:

<<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html>>

United Nations High Commission for Refugees

<www.unhcr.ch>

<http://www.refugees.org/world/statistics/wrs00_tableindex.htm>

an excellent all around site – with good information on international issues

Welsh contacts:

Oxfam (20757067)

Vaughan Robinson, University of Wales Swansea, 01792 295228

Welsh Refugee Council (20666250)

Outside Wales:

Refugee Council (0207 820 3085)

Asylum Aid (020-7377-5123)

COUNTRY INFORMATION

Iraqis are Largest Group of UK Asylum Seekers in 2000

In the week that the final government figures for asylum applications in 2000 are expected to be released, Amnesty International UK has highlighted that applicants from Iraq will be the single largest group and the group showing the largest increase from 1999.

As with most groups fleeing persecution, the vast majority of Iraqis stay close to home. Only 1-2% of Iraqi refugees come to the UK, with around 80% fleeing to neighbouring Iran.

The majority of Iraqi asylum seekers in 2000 were given permission to stay in the UK, but many recent applicants have been refused due to Home Office bureaucracy. Applicants in the government's dispersal programme in particular often struggled to find legal advice or translators before the deadlines by which they were required to make their claims.

The six countries from which most UK asylum applicants fled in 2000 all have appalling human rights records (see over). Applicants from Iraq, Iran, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Sri Lanka, Somalia and Afghanistan made up nearly half of the total.

Jan-Nov 2000 1999

Country of Applications	Total Applications
Iraq	6,410
Federal RY	6,215
Sri Lanka	5,455
Afghanistan	4,740
Iran	4,650
Somalia	4,385

TOP 5 Refugee-Source Countries in 2000

Iraq

2000-01 - Continuing serious concerns regarding torture, executions, unfair trials and 'disappearances'.

1999 - Violent clashes between the security forces and armed Islamist activists in the predominantly Shi'a south were frequently reported, especially following the killing in suspicious circumstances on 19 February of Ayatollah Sadeq al-Sadr, a prominent Shi'a cleric. Dozens of people from both sides were killed. Hundreds of people, including political prisoners and possible prisoners of conscience, were executed and large-scale arbitrary arrests of suspected political opponents took place. Torture and ill-treatment of prisoners and detainees were widely reported. Hundreds of non-Arab families, mostly Kurds, were forcibly expelled from their homes in the Kirkuk area to Iraqi Kurdistan.

Afghanistan

2000-01 - Continuing serious concerns regarding executions, amputations, unfair trials and persecution of ethnic minorities and women.

1999 - Human rights abuses by the warring factions against members of rival ethnic groups occurred throughout 1999. Taliban forces burned homes, destroyed orchards, wheat fields and irrigation systems and forcibly displaced more than 100,000 mainly Tajik people. Women, children, human rights defenders, members of ethnic groups, people accused of homosexual activity, and refugees were systematically targeted by the Taliban and other warring factions on the basis of their identity. Taliban courts imposed sentences of death, amputation and flogging after apparently unfair trials.

Iran

2000-2001- Continuing serious concerns regarding prisoners of conscience, religious persecution, unfair trials, floggings, executions and torture.

1999 - Hundreds of people, including possible prisoners of conscience, were held without charge or trial following student demonstrations in July against the growing restrictions on freedom of expression and the closure of the daily newspaper Salam. Most were released within two months, but hundreds remained in detention at the end of the year and at least four people were sentenced to death. Numerous publications were forced to close and scores of journalists faced arrest and interrogation. There were continued reports of torture and ill-treatment, and judicial corporal punishments continued to be imposed. AI recorded 165 executions, although the true number may have been considerably higher. Religious minorities continued to face persecution.

Federal Republic of Yugoslavia

2000 - Continuing serious concerns regarding unfair trials, extrajudicial executions, torture and prisoners of conscience until the installation of the new government in October 2000.

1999 - The armed conflict between the Serbian and Yugoslav forces, and armed ethnic Albanians of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) reached its climax between March and June after NATO intervened with air attacks against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY). Gross human rights violations on a large scale by Serbian police and paramilitary units and by the Yugoslav army drove around 850,000 ethnic Albanians out of Kosovo, creating a regional refugee crisis. Extrajudicial executions, "disappearances", arbitrary detention, torture, ill-treatment, forcible expulsions and the deliberate destruction of homes were widespread and systematic. Human rights violations occurred throughout the rest of the FRY. Hundreds of anti-government demonstrators were beaten by police. Opposition activists, independent journalists and conscientious objectors were arrested and imprisoned.

Somalia

2000-01 No national government of any kind in place, serious human rights abuses by clan based factions continue.

1999 - Somalia continued to witness widespread abuses of human rights by the armed militias of clan-based factions, who operated with impunity. Somalia has had no judiciary or functioning court system since the central government collapsed in 1991. Islamic (Shari'a) courts formed militias and were themselves involved in human rights abuses. They condemned to death several prisoners who were subsequently executed. Scores of deliberate and arbitrary killings of unarmed civilians were carried out by

clan-based militias. Human rights abuses included abductions and hostage-taking. Forced recruitment of child soldiers and rape were widespread.

Sri Lanka

2000-01 - Continuing serious concerns about torture and 'disappearances'.

1999 - Grave human rights abuses were reported in the context of the protracted armed conflict between the security forces and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), the main armed opposition group fighting for an independent state, Eelam, in the north and east of the country. Members of the LTTE were responsible for deliberate and arbitrary killings of civilians, torture, hostage-taking and abductions. The government announced an end to the practice of automatic commutation of death sentences in force since 1976.

(Source: Amnesty International)

For further information:

<www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk/default.asp?pageid=88> Home Office country assessments

Welsh contacts:

Oxfam (20 757067)

Amnesty International (029 20465 378)

Save the Children (029 2039 6838)

British Red Cross (20480 289)

VOUCHERS

The 1999 Immigration Act replaced cash support with vouchers. New asylum seekers receive vouchers instead of income support. These vouchers, for use in shops selling essential goods, are worth 70% of current income support levels. Existing applicants will be gradually transferred to this scheme, which the government admits will be more expensive to operate than the previous cash benefit system. This inadequate level of support to some of the poorest and most vulnerable people is compounded by the fact that **retailers cannot give change** on purchases made with vouchers.

The T&G, Oxfam and the Refugee Council believe that the case against vouchers is compelling. In particular, we believe that:

- Vouchers do not deter economic migration
- Vouchers do not reduce costs
- Vouchers undermine the fight against social exclusion and child poverty
- **Vouchers do not deter economic migration**

But the available evidence suggests that there is no causal relationship between removing cash payments and reductions in asylum applications. Rather than any fall in applications, since the introduction of the NASS scheme applications for asylum in the UK have risen steadily from 5,890 in April 2000 to 6,970 in October (Ref:Home Office, Asylum Statistics, October 2000) and the main countries of origin remain the same (Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Somalia and Turkey). In other words, no deterrent effect is discernible.

Similarly, in the years following the 1996 Immigration and Asylum Act, when very restricted local authority 'in kind'/voucher support arrangements were in place, applications also rose steadily - from 2900 per month in January 1998 to 4700 a year later, and reaching 6100 in January 2000.

- **Vouchers do not reduce costs**

In the White Paper preceding the Act (*Fairer, Faster and Firmer*; July 1998), the Government admitted that administering vouchers would be more costly than supporting asylum seekers through any cash-based alternative. Indeed, the Government's own figures show that the unit cost for supporting a single adult asylum seeker on DSS benefits was £425 a month between 1999/2000. Under the new support arrangements the figure stands at the far higher level of £700. Even taking into account the fact that the latter figure includes the cost of travel from dispersal accommodation to Immigration interviews, the overall cost of a voucher scheme are clearly far greater.¹²

¹² RDS: Asylum Seeker Support-estimates of public expenditure

- **Vouchers undermine the fight against social exclusion and child poverty**

Under the Government's NASS system, asylum seekers and their families - already one of the most vulnerable groups in society - will be forced to live on 70% of the amount UK citizens receive.

When the cost of household utilities (e.g. gas, water, electricity) are added to this figure, at most it will amount to 80% of the basic income support level. The impact is especially severe on asylum-seekers with particular needs, including children, pregnant women, the disabled and the elderly.

For example, since April 2000 a UK family with two children receives £149.40 a week on Income Support. But a similar asylum seeking family will only receive £110.57 a week overall – a significant difference of £38.83 every week.

	UK Family (2 children)	Asylum-seeking Family (2 children)
Couple over 18	81.95	57.37
Child A	26.60	26.60
Child B	26.60	26.60
Family premium	14.25	Not eligible
Total	£149.50	£110.57

Asylum seeking children are also denied access to a range of other safety-net benefits, such as milk tokens and vitamins.

(Source: Oxfam)

For further information:

<www.oxfam.org.uk/campaign/cutconflict/asylum/asylumuk.htm>

Welsh contacts:

Oxfam (20757067)

Lisa Hassan, Cardiff Law Centre (20498 117)

DETENTION

The Home Office does not provide statistics as to who is detained in prison: either pre-removal people or those who have come with illegal documents

Persons recorded as being in detention in the United Kingdom solely under 1971 Immigration Act powers as at **30th November 2000**, by place of detention

Immigration detention centres	
Campsfield House	183
Dover Harbour	20
Harmondsworth	76
Harwich	4
Heathrow	14
Manchester Airport	14
Tinsley House	122
Other immigration centres	1

Prison establishments			
Altcourse	6	High Down	22
Bedford	6	Holloway	14
Belmarsh	35	Holme House	2
Birmingham	7	Lancaster Farms	3
Blakenhurst	3	Leeds	3
Brixton	16	Lewes	2
Brockhill	2	Lindholme	104
Bullingdon	2	Liverpool	15
Canterbury	3	Manchester	9
Craiginchies	8	Norwich	3
Doncaster	6	Pentonville	13
Durham	6	Rochester	188
Exeter	2	Styal	3
Feltham	7	The Mount	2
Forest Bank	5	Wandsworth	9
Gateside	25	Winchester	8
Gloucester	2	Wormwood Scrubs	17
Haslar	157	Other prison establ.	14

Total 1163

- Asylum seekers held in prison establishments are subject to prison rules.
- Figures exclude persons detained in police cells (other than at Dover Harbour).
- Figures for Prison establishments may include some persons detained under dual immigration and other powers.

- Since coming to power in May 1997, up to the end of November 2000, New Labour have deported over 136,503 people.

The number of principal applicants held at Oakington since its opening is shown in the following table. A breakdown of the number of dependants by nationality could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Nationality		Number	
Albania	322	Latvia	31
Bangladesh	68	Nigeria	19
China	387	Pakistan	254
Cote d'Ivoire	12	Poland	113
Czech Republic	303	Romania	265
Estonia	22	Slovakia	23
Ghana	30	Tanzania	3
India	44	Uganda	23
Iraq	38	Yugoslavia (Serbia & Montenegro)	42
Kosovo/Kos. Albanian	273	Zimbabwe	189
Lithuania	73		

Total 2,534

(Source: National Coalition of Anti-Deportation Campaigns)

Wales and Detention

Speech in the Welsh Assembly by Edwina Hart – January 2001

"The Government is determined to increase the number of removals from the United Kingdom of immigration offenders and failed asylum applicants. The target for removal of failed asylum seekers is 12000 this year and 30000 during the next financial year.

Because of the high level of absconding it is regrettably necessary to detain people to facilitate their removal.

Whilst the Government accepts that there will always be a need to use prisons for a minority of immigration detainees for reasons of security and location, it remains determined to reduce the use of prisons for this purpose in the longer term. It is committed to a strategy of accommodating the majority of immigration detainees in dedicated detention and holding centres.

To meet these two objectives it is undertaking an expansion in the detention estate by 1800 beds.

However additional dedicated detention and holding centres will not become fully available until October 2001.

An additional 500 places has been made available in Prisons in remand accommodation for males aged 21 and over. These will support the Government's removals programme for a period of about 12 months until the 1800 new detention places come on stream.

Cardiff is one of a number of Prisons which have been proposed for this purpose. Discussions are underway between the Prison and Immigration Services to put the detailed arrangements in hand. Up to fifty beds are expected to be used in Cardiff but the accommodation of detainees there will not commence before the middle of February."

United Nations High Commission for Refugees

Guidelines on Applicable Criteria and Standards Relating to the Detention of Asylum Seekers 1

Introduction.

1. The detention of asylum-seekers is in the view of UNHCR inherently undesirable. This is even more so in the case of vulnerable groups such as single women, children, unaccompanied minors and those with special medical or psychological needs. Freedom from arbitrary detention is a fundamental human right, and the use of detention is in many instances, contrary to the norms and principles of international law.

2. Of key significance to the issue of detention is Article 31 of the 1951 Convention.² Article 31 exempts refugees coming directly from a country of persecution from being punished on account of their illegal entry or presence, provided they present themselves without delay to the authorities and show good cause for their illegal entry or presence. The Article also provides that Contracting States shall not apply to the movements of such refugees restrictions other than those which are **necessary**, and that any restrictions shall only be applied until such time as their status is regularised, or they obtain admission into another country.

3. Consistent with this Article, detention should only be resorted to in cases of **necessity**. The detention of asylum-seekers who come "directly" in an irregular manner should, therefore, not be automatic nor should it be unduly prolonged. This provision applies not only to recognised refugees but also to asylum-seekers pending determination of their status, as recognition of refugee status does not make an individual a refugee but declares him to be one. Conclusion No. 44(XXXVII) of the Executive Committee on the Detention of Refugees and Asylum-Seekers examines more concretely what is meant by the term "**necessary**". This Conclusion also provides guidelines to States on the use of detention and recommendations as to certain procedural guarantees to which detainees should be entitled.

4. The expression "**coming directly**" in Article 31(1), covers the situation of a person who enters the country in which asylum is sought directly from the country of origin, or from another country where his protection, safety and security could not be assured. It is understood that this term also covers a person who transits an intermediate country for a short period of time without having applied for, or

received, asylum there. No strict time limit can be applied to the concept "**coming directly**" and each case must be judged on its merits. Similarly, given the special situation of asylum seekers, in particular the effects of trauma, language problems, lack of information, previous experiences which often result in a suspicion of those in authority, feelings of general insecurity, and the fact that these and other circumstances may vary enormously from one asylum seeker to another, there is no time limit which can be mechanically applied or associated with the expression "**without delay**". The expression '**good cause**', requires a consideration of the circumstances under which the asylum-seeker fled. The term "asylum-seeker" in these guidelines applies to those whose claims are being considered under an admissibility or pre-screening procedure as well as those who are being considered under refugee status determination procedures. It also includes those exercising their right to seek judicial and/or administrative review of their asylum request.

5. Asylum-seekers are entitled to benefit from the protection afforded by various International and Regional Human Rights Instruments which set out the basic standards and norms of treatment. Whereas each State has a right to control those entering into their territory, these rights must be exercised in accordance with a prescribed law which is accessible and formulated with sufficient precision for the regulation of individual conduct. For detention of asylum-seekers to be lawful and not arbitrary, it must comply not only with the applicable national law, but with Article 31 of the Convention and international law. It must be exercised in a non-discriminatory manner and must be subject to judicial or administrative review to ensure that it continues to be necessary in the circumstances, with the possibility of release where no grounds for its continuance exist.³

6. Although these guidelines deal specifically with the detention of asylum-seekers the issue of the detention of stateless persons needs to be highlighted.⁴ While the majority of stateless persons are not asylum-seekers, a paragraph on the detention of stateless persons is included in these guidelines in recognition of UNHCR's formal responsibilities for this group and also because the basic standards and norms of treatment contained in international human rights instruments applicable to detainees generally should be applied to both asylum-seekers and stateless persons. The inability of stateless persons who have left their countries of habitual residence to return to them, has been a reason for unduly prolonged or arbitrary detention of these persons in third countries. Similarly, individuals whom the State of nationality refuses to accept back on the basis that nationality was withdrawn or lost while they were out of the country, or who are not acknowledged as nationals without proof of nationality which in the circumstances is difficult to acquire; have also been held in prolonged or indefinite detention only because the question of where to send them remains unresolved.

Guideline 1: Scope of the Guidelines.

These guidelines apply to all asylum-seekers who are being considered for, or who are in, detention or detention like situations. For the purpose of these guidelines, UNHCR considers detention as: **confinement within a narrowly bounded or restricted location, including prisons, closed camps, detention facilities or airport transit zones, where freedom of movement is substantially curtailed, and where the only opportunity to leave this limited area is to leave the territory.** There is a

qualitative difference between detention and other restrictions on freedom of movement. Persons who are subject to limitations on domicile and residency are not generally considered to be in detention.

When considering whether an asylum-seeker is in detention, the cumulative impact of the restrictions as well as the degree and intensity of each of them should also be assessed.

Guideline 2: General Principle

As a general principle asylum-seekers should not be detained.

According to Article 14 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the right to seek and enjoy asylum is recognised as a basic human right. In exercising this right asylum-seekers are often forced to arrive at, or enter a territory illegally. However the position of asylum-seekers differs fundamentally from that of ordinary aliens in that they may not be in a position to comply with the legal formalities for entry. This element, as well as the fact that asylum-seekers have often had traumatic experiences, should be taken into account in determining any restrictions on freedom of movement based on illegal entry or presence.

Guideline 3: Exceptional Grounds for Detention.

Detention of asylum-seekers may exceptionally be resorted to for the reasons set out below as long as this is clearly prescribed by a national law which is in conformity with general norms and principles of international human rights law. These are contained in the main human rights instruments.⁵

There should be a presumption against detention. Where there are monitoring mechanisms which can be employed as viable alternatives to detention, (such as reporting obligations or guarantor requirements [see Guideline 4]), these should be applied **first** unless there is evidence to suggest that such an alternative will not be effective in the individual case. Detention should therefore only take place after a full consideration of all possible alternatives, or when monitoring mechanisms have been demonstrated not to have achieved the lawful and legitimate purpose.

In assessing whether detention of asylum-seekers is necessary, account should be taken of whether it is reasonable to do so and whether it is proportional to the objectives to be achieved. If judged necessary it should only be imposed in a non discriminatory manner for a minimal period.⁶

The permissible exceptions to the general rule that detention should normally be avoided must be prescribed by law. In conformity with EXCOM Conclusion No. 44 (XXXVII) the detention of asylum-seekers may only be resorted to, if **necessary:**
(i) to verify identity.

In those cases where identity may be undetermined or in dispute.

(ii) to determine the elements on which the claim for refugee status or asylum is based.

This statement means that the asylum-seeker may be detained exclusively for the purposes of a preliminary interview to identify the basis of the asylum claim.⁷ This would involve obtaining essential facts from the asylum-seeker as to why asylum is being sought and would not extend to a determination of the merits or otherwise of the claim. This exception to the general principle cannot be used to justify detention for the entire status determination procedure, or for an unlimited period of time.

(iii) in cases where asylum-seekers have destroyed their travel and /or identity documents or have used fraudulent documents in order to mislead the authorities of the State, in which they intend to claim asylum.

What must be established is the absence of good faith on the part of the applicant to comply with the verification of identity process. As regards asylum-seekers using fraudulent documents or travelling with no documents at all, detention is only permissible when there **is an intention** to mislead, or a refusal to co-operate with the authorities. Asylum-seekers who arrive without documentation because they are unable to obtain any in their country of origin should not be detained solely for that reason.

(iv) to protect national security and public order.

This relates to cases where there is evidence to show that the asylum-seeker has criminal antecedents and/or affiliations which are likely to pose a risk to public order or national security should he/she be allowed entry.

Detention of asylum-seekers which is applied for purposes other than those listed above, for example, as part of a policy to deter future asylum-seekers, or to dissuade those who have commenced their claims from pursuing them, is contrary to the norms of refugee law. It should not be used as a punitive or disciplinary measure for illegal entry or presence in the country, and should be avoided for failure to comply with administrative requirements or breach of reception centre, refugee camp, or other institutional restrictions. Escape from detention should not lead to the automatic discontinuance of the asylum procedure, nor to return to the country of origin, having regard to the principle of non- refoulement.⁸

Guideline 4: Alternatives to Detention

Alternatives to the detention of an asylum-seeker until status is determined should be considered. The choice of an alternative would be influenced by an individual assessment of the personal circumstances of the asylum-seeker concerned and prevailing local conditions.

Alternatives to detention which may be considered are as follows:

(I) Monitoring Requirements.

Reporting Requirements: An asylum-seeker staying out of detention may be conditional on compliance with periodic reporting requirements during the status determination procedures. Release could be on the asylum-seeker's own recognisance. Alternatively or additionally, that of a family member, NGO or Community group who would be expected to ensure the asylum-seeker reports to the authorities periodically, their compliance with status determination procedures, and their appearance at hearings and official appointments.

Residency Requirements: An asylum seeker would not be detained on condition they reside at a specific address or within a particular administrative region until their status has been determined. Asylum-seekers would have to obtain prior approval to change their address or move out of the administrative region. However this would not be unreasonably withheld where the main purpose of the relocation was to facilitate family reunification or closeness to relatives.⁹

(ii) Provision of a Guarantor/ Surety. An asylum seeker would be required to provide guarantor who would be responsible for ensuring their attendance at official appointments and hearings, failure of which a penalty most likely the forfeiture of a sum of money, would be levied against the guarantor.

(iii) Release on Bail. This alternative allows for asylum-seekers already in detention to apply for release on bail, subject to the provision of recognisance's and sureties. For this to be genuinely available to asylum-seekers they must be informed of its availability and the amount set must not be so high as to be prohibitive.

(iv) Open Centres. Asylum-seekers may be released on condition that they reside at specific collective accommodation centres where they would be allowed to obtain permission to leave the centre and return during stipulated times.

These alternatives are not exhaustive. They identify options which provide State authorities with a degree of control over the whereabouts of asylum-seekers while allowing asylum-seekers basic freedom of movement.

Guideline 5: Procedural Safeguards.10

If detained, asylum-seekers should be entitled to the following minimum procedural guarantees:

(i) to receive prompt and full communication of any order of detention, together with the reasons for the order, and the rights in connection with the order, in a language and in terms they understand.

(ii) to be informed of the right to legal counsel. Where possible, they should receive free legal assistance.

(iii) to have the decision subjected to an automatic review before a judicial or administrative body independent of the detaining authorities. This should be followed by regular periodic reviews of the necessity for the continuance of detention at which the asylum-seeker or his representative would have the right to attend.

(iv) either personally or through a representative, to challenge the necessity of the deprivation of liberty at the review hearing, and to rebut any findings made. Such a right should extend to all aspects of the case and not simply the executive discretion to detain.

(v) to contact and be contacted by the local UNHCR Office, available national refugee bodies or other agencies and an advocate. The right to communicate with these representatives in private, and the means to make such contact should be made available.

Detention should in no way constitute an obstacle to the asylum-seekers' possibilities to pursue their asylum application.

Guideline 6: Detention of Persons under the Age of 18 years.11

In accordance with the general principle stated at Guideline 2 and UNHCR's Guidelines on Refugee Children, **minors who are asylum-seekers should not be detained.**

In this aspect particular reference is made to The Convention on the Rights of the Child in particular:

- Article 2 which requires that States take all measures appropriate to ensure that children are protected from all forms of discrimination or punishment on the basis of the status, activities, expressed opinions, or beliefs of the child's parents, legal guardians or family members;
- Article 3 which provides that in any action taken by States Parties concerning children, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration;
- Article 9 which grants children the right not to be separated from their parents against their will;

- Article 22 which requires that States take appropriate measures to ensure that minors who are seeking refugee status or who are recognised refugees, whether accompanied or not, receive appropriate protection and assistance: and
- Article 37 by which State Parties are required to ensure that the detention of minors shall be used only as a measure of last resort and for the shortest appropriate period of time.

Unaccompanied minors should not, as a general rule, be detained. Where possible they should be released into the care of family members who already have residency within the asylum country. Otherwise, alternative care arrangements should be made by the competent child care authorities for unaccompanied minors to receive adequate accommodation and appropriate supervision. Residential homes for children or foster care may provide the necessary facilities to ensure that their proper development, (both physical and mental), is catered for while longer term solutions are being considered.

All appropriate alternatives to detention should be considered in the case of children accompanying their parents. Children and their primary caregivers should not be detained unless this is the only means of maintaining family unity.

If none of the alternatives can be applied and States do detain children, this should, in accordance with Article 37 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, be as a measure of last resort, and for the shortest period of time in accordance with the exceptions stated at Guideline 3

If children who are asylum-seekers are detained at airports, immigration-holding centres or prisons, they must not be held under prison- like conditions. All efforts must be made to have them released from detention and placed in other accommodation. If this proves impossible, special arrangements must be made for living quarters which are suitable for children and their families.

During detention children have the right to an education which should optimally take place outside the detention premises in order to facilitate the continuance of their education upon release. Provision should also be made for their recreation and play which is essential to a child's mental development and to alleviate stress and trauma. Children who are detained, benefit from the same minimum procedural guarantees (listed at Guideline 5) as adults. A legal guardian or adviser should be appointed for unaccompanied minors.¹²

Guideline 7: Detention of Vulnerable Persons.

Given the very negative effects of detention on the psychological well being of those detained, active consideration of possible alternatives should precede any order to detain asylum-seekers falling within the following vulnerable categories listed:¹³

Unaccompanied elderly Persons.

Torture or Trauma Victims.

Persons with mental or physical disability.

In the event that individuals falling within these categories are detained, it is advisable that this should only be on the certification of a qualified medical practitioner that detention will not adversely affect their health and well being. In addition there must be regular follow up and support by a relevant skilled professional. They must also have access to services, hospitalisation, medication counselling etc. should it become necessary.

Guideline 8: Detention of Women.

Women asylum-seekers and adolescent girls, especially those who arrive unaccompanied, are particularly at risk when compelled to remain in detention centres. As a general rule the detention of pregnant women in their final months and nursing mothers both of whom may have special needs should be avoided.

Where women asylum-seekers are detained they should be accommodated separately from male asylum-seekers, unless these are close family relatives. In order to respect cultural values and improve the physical protection of women in detention centres the use of female staff is recommended.

Women asylum-seekers should receive the same access to legal and other services without discrimination as to their gender ¹⁴, and specific services in response to their special needs.¹⁵ In particular they should have access to gynaecological and obstetrical services.

Conclusion.

The increasing use of detention as a restriction on the freedom of movement of asylum seekers on the grounds of their illegal entry is a matter of major concern to UNHCR, NGOs, other Agencies as well as Governments. The issue is not a straightforward one and it is hoped these guidelines have addressed the legal standards and norms applicable to the use of detention. Detention as a mechanism which seeks to address the particular concerns of States related to illegal entry requires the exercise of great caution in its use to ensure that it does not serve to undermine the fundamental principles upon which the regime of international protection is based.

Endnotes.

¹. These Guidelines address exclusively the detention of asylum seekers. The detention of refugees is generally covered by national law and subject to the principles, norms and standards contained in the 1951 Convention, and the applicable human rights instruments.

². 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees.

³. Views of the Human Rights Committee on Communication No. 560/1993, 59th Session, CCPR/C/D/560/1993.

⁴. UNHCR has been requested to provide technical and advisory services to states on nationality legislation or practice resulting in statelessness. EXCOM Conclusion No. 78(XLVI) (1995), General Assembly Resolution 50/152, 1996. See also Guidelines: Field Office Activities Concerning Statelessness. (IOM/66/98-FOM70/98).

⁵. Article 9(1) International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. (ICCPR)

Article 37(b) UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. (CRC)

Article 5(1) European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. (ECHR)

Article 7(2) American Convention on Human Rights 1969. (American Convention)

Article 5 African Charter on Human and People's Rights. (African Charter)

⁶. Article 9(1), Article 12 ICCPR,

Article 37(b) CRC

Article 5(1)(f) ECHR

Article 7(3) American Convention

Article 6 African Charter.

EXCOM Conclusion No. 44(XXXVII)

⁷. EXCOM Conclusion No. 44

⁸. Sub Committee of the Whole of International Protection Note EC/SCP/44 Paragraph 51(c).

⁹. Art 16, Art 12 UDHR

¹⁰. Article 9(2) and (4) ICCPR

Article 37(d) CRC

Article 5(2) and (4) ECHR

Article 7(1) African Charter.

Article 7(4) and (5) American Convention

EXCOM Conclusion no. 44 (XXXVII)

UN Body of Principles for the Protection of All Persons under any Form of Detention or Imprisonment. 1988

UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners 1955

11. See also UN Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty 1990

12. An adult who is familiar with the child's language and culture may also alleviate the stress and trauma of being alone in unfamiliar surroundings.

13. Although it must be recognised that most individuals will be able to articulate their claims, this may not be the case in those who are victims of trauma. Care must be taken when dealing with these individuals as their particular problems may not be apparent, and it will require care and skill to assess the situation of a person with mental disability or a disoriented older refugee who is alone.

14. See UNHCR Guidelines on The Protection of Refugee Women.

15. Women particularly those who have travelled alone may have been exposed to violence and exploitation prior to and during their flight and will require counselling.

For further information:

National Coalition of Anti-Deportation Campaigns

<www.ncadc.org.uk/>

United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR)

<www.unhcr.ch>

Welsh contacts:

Lisa Hassan, Cardiff Law Centre (20498117)

Amnesty International (029 20465 378)

Oxfam (20757 067)

Prof. Richard Piotrowicz, Law Department, University of Wales, Aberystwyth
(01970 622712)

Outside Wales:

National Coalition of Anti-Deportation Campaigns (020 7701 5197)

UNHCR (020 7828 9191)

Asylum Aid (020-7377-5123)

MEDIA AND ATTITUDES

British most hostile to asylum

The British are the most hostile to political refugees of all EC people, according to a report from the European monitoring centre on racism and xenophobia. British acceptance of genuine asylum seekers is the lowest of the EU member states. Asked if "people suffering from human rights violations in their country" who are seeking asylum should be accepted without restrictions, only 12 percent replied yes, less than half the EU average of 25 percent.

<<http://press.coe.int/press2/press.asp?B=62,0,0,105,0&M=http://press.coe.int/dossiers/105/E/e-uk.htm>> **Council of Europe report**

The National Union of Journalists, representing over 30,000 members, has a major campaign to change media attitudes towards asylum seekers and refugees. The Union is urging its 30,000 members in the UK and Ireland to work with refugee organisations to report the real stories about asylum-seekers fleeing torture and oppression and the problems which they face in Britain, as part of a major campaign to improve media attitudes towards asylum seekers and refugees. *For more information contact Terry Williams: williams.t@cableinet.co.uk or ring 0121 588 6341*

MORI POLL Britain Today - Are We An Intolerant Nation?

23 October 2000

A Readers Digest poll has shown the pernicious impact of inaccurate and prejudicial media coverage on public perceptions of refugees and asylum seekers. Face to face interviews with over 2,000 people aged 15+, conducted by Mori, revealed that

- 80% think refugees see the UK as a 'soft touch'
- 63% think asylum seekers get £113 a week (instead of £36.54)
- 20% of the population are immigrants (4% is accurate)
- 26% of the population are from ethnic minorities (7% is nearer the mark).

Available at: <www.mori.com/polls/2000/rd-july.shtml>

For further information:

Welsh contacts:

Terry Threadgold, (20874756)

Tammy Speers, (20875461)

Marie Gillespie (01792 -205678 ext 4325)

Outside Wales:

PressWise Trust: 0117 941 5889

RACISM IN WALES

Risk of race attacks highest outside Britain's big cities, survey reveals Hidden truth behind race crimes in Britain

Race attacks are almost 10 times more likely to happen in rural areas, according to an exclusive survey for The Observer, which also shows that more than two thirds of people think the police are as racist as ever.

Two years after the publication of Sir William Macpherson's report into the Stephen Lawrence murder inquiry, our findings show that one in 12 of the ethnic minority population in Northumbria have reported a racist incident since February 1999, compared with one in 200 in the West Midlands.

Confidence in police handling of race-related incidents has also plunged. An exclusive poll by ICM for The Observer found that more than 70 per cent of the public think the police are as racist, or more so, than they were when the Macpherson Report was published.

Sir John Stevens, the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, which serves the country's largest ethnic minority community, last night yesterday described the survey's findings as 'disappointing'.

Using official Home Office figures on racist incidents in each constabulary and plotting them against the size of the local ethnic minority population, a startling racial audit shows a country where safety lies in numbers.

The most dangerous areas for ethnic minorities are also those where there are the smallest communities. Northumbria tops the list, but is closely followed by Devon and Cornwall and south Wales, where racial crimes affect one in 15 and one in 16 respectively.

- ICM Research interviewed a random selection of 1,206 adults aged 18-plus from 25-30 January 2001 across the country.

(Source: The Observer, <www.guardian.co.uk/racism/Story/0,2763,439683,00.html>)

For further information:

Welsh contacts:

Race Equality First: (029 20224 097)

Commission for Racial Equality (029 20388 977)

South East Wales Race Equality Council: (01633 250006)

MEWN Cymru (Black and Ethnic Minority Women) (029 20 464 445)

WEBSITES – a sample

Refugee Non-Governmental Organisations

<www.refugeecouncil.org.uk> Refugee Council:
<homepages.poptel.org.uk/migrantmedia/docs/migrantmedia.htm>
<www.ncadc.org.uk/> National Coalition of Anti-Deportation Campaigns (NCADC)
<www.star-network.org.uk> Student Action for Refugees

Portals for media coverage of refugees

<www.presswise.org.uk> PressWise Trust
<www.diversity-online.org> Diversity Online
<www.kurdishmedia.com> Kurdishmedia
<www.newvision.org.uk> Newspaper created by refugees

Non-Governmental Organisations

<www.oxfam.org.uk>
<www.amnesty.org> Amnesty International Library -
<www.rwlg.org.uk> Refugee Women's Legal Group (UK) –
<www.ilpa.org.uk> Immigration Law Practitioners' Association
<www.torturecare.org.uk> The Medical Foundation

United Nations sites:

<www.unhcr.ch/> United Nations High Commission for Refugees
<www.unhcr-50.org>
<www.unifem.undp.org/index.htm> United Nations Development Fund for Women
<www.undp.org/toppages/discover/index.html> United Nations Development Programme

UK Govt sites:

<www.homeoffice.gov.uk/ind/asylum/asylum_contents02.html> The Country Information & Policy Unit (CIPU) of the Home Office Asylum and Appeals Policy Directorate have produced assessments on the thirty-five countries which generate the largest number of asylum applications in the UK.
<www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html> Home Office Statistics
<www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk/default.asp?pageid=15> Home Office Asylum Pages

Refugees in Western Nations

<www.immigrationindex.org>
<www.errc.org/> European Roma Rights Centre
<www.english.drc.dk/> Denmark Council for Refugees
<www.refugees.org> US Committee for Refugees
<www.hrw.org/> Human Rights Watch

Research on the Web

<www.mori.com/> MORI poll on immigration
<www.irr.org.uk/dispersal> Institute for Race Relations report 'The Dispersal of Xenophobia'
<194.66.253.138/ePublicHealth/html/refugees.html> 'The Health and Well-Being of Asylum Seekers and Refugees'

<bmj.com/cgi/content/full/322/7284/485> British Medical Journal 'Asylum seekers and refugees in Britain: What brings asylum seekers to the United Kingdom?'

<www.oneworld.org/guides/migration/> One World

<www.eumc.at> European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia:

CONTACTS

Housing:

Lisa Hassan, Cardiff Law Centre (029 20498 117)
Welsh Refugee Council (20666350)

Legal/ Detention

Lisa Hassan, Cardiff Law Centre (029 20498117)
Prof. Rysard Piotrowski, Law Department, University of Aberystwyth (01970 622712)
National Coalition of Anti-Deportation Campaigns (020 7701 5197)
Refugee Council (London): 0207 820 3085

Unaccompanied Minors/ Young People:

Save the Children (Mike Lewis) (029 2039 6838)
Displaced People in Action (Leona Evans) (029 20415 710/ 07900 191933)
Angus Dunphy, Head Teacher, Fitzalan High School (029 20385040)
Barnardos: (Wendy Flynn) (note: will only comment on issues directly related to their work) (029 20493 387)

Refugee Community Organisations

Kosovar Albanian Association (029 2041 5715)
Vietnamese Community Association (029 20 415 713)
Sudanese Community Association (029 2041 5710)
Newport and District Refugee Support Group, Miqdad Al-Nuaimi (01633 233427)
Somali Progressive Association (029 2025 5526)

North Wales:

John Roberts (Oxfam) 01978 314210

Dispersal:

Vaughan Robinson, Geography Department, University of Wales Swansea, (01792 295228)
Welsh Refugee Council (20666250)

Vouchers:

Oxfam (029 20757067)

Media:

Tammy Speers (029 20875461)
Terry Threadgold (029 20874756)
Lyra Salnahana (029 2032 2000)
Marie Gillespie 01792 -205678 ext 4325

Country information:

Red Cross (also have a search and find relatives) (029 20480 289)
Save the Children (Mike Lewis) (029 2039 6838)
Medical Foundation for Care of Victims of Torture (0270 813 9999)

Politicians:

Edwina Hart, AM Gower (029 20 825111)
John Griffiths, AM Newport East (029 20 825111)
Helen Mary Jones, AM Llanelli (029 20 825111)

Churches:

Church in Wales (029 20231638)

Police:

Vincent Donovan, South Wales Police (029 20222111)

Racism in Wales:

Race Equality First: (029 20224 097)
Commission for Racial Equality (029 20388 977)
South East Wales Race Equality Council: (01633 250006)
MEWN Cymru (Black and Ethnic Minority Women) (029 20 464 445)

Cardiff and Wales Consortia

Cardiff Consortium: Rob Webb 029 2089 3614
All Wales Consortium: Lucy Jackson 01633 244491



Source: Guardian