

# Sanctuary

A bi-monthly newsletter on asylum, refugee and migrant matters from a religious perspective  
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## OVERVIEW

**Asylum Applications** for the two months, Sept (155) and October (143), totalled 298

**First Instance:** Of 337 applications processed in Sept/Oct '10, some 4 applicants were recognized as refugees at *first instance* and some 178 applicants were refused following interview. Among a further 113 refusals are some 96 which relate to applications *withdrawn/deemed withdrawn*. Some 42 applicants were returned to the EU country to which they first arrived (*Dublin II Regulation*).

**Appeal Stage:** Of 269 *Substantive Appeals* processed in Sept/Oct '10, some 35 appellants were recognized as refugees, some 231 were refused. In the same period, 2 appeals were withdrawn.

**Top Countries of Origin** of new asylum applicants in 2010, up to 31 Oct:

Nigeria: 19%; China: 11%; Pakistan: 10%; Afghanistan: 4%; DR Congo: 3%.

**Backlog** of unprocessed cases at 31 Oct 2010: 1,589 (*First Instance: 530 ; Appeals:1,059*).

**Family Reunification (FR):** New applications in Sept/Oct '10 totalled 62 (with 103 dependants). Some 37 applications (71 dependants) were processed to completion (ie. report sent to Min. Justice).

**FR applicants - top countries of origin** in 2010, up to 31 Oct - Somalia: 13%; Sudan: 13%; Iraq: 10%; Nigeria: 9%; Afghanistan: 8%;

**Removals** - 1 Jan-30 Sept 2010: Some 706 Deportation Orders were *signed* and, of those, 198 were *effected* (ie 198 people removed from the State). In the same period there were 316 *Voluntary Returns*.

**Leave to Remain (LTR)** - In the nine months up to 30 Sept' 10, some 759 people were granted LTR in the State - Jan: 38; Feb: 39; March: 51; April: 95; May: 99; June: 102; July: 153; Aug: 68; Sept: 114.

**Direct Provision** – 14.11.2010; **Centres:** 42; **Capacity:** 6,395; **Residents:** 5,756, in 18 counties; 636 in Mosney; 340 in Athlone; 305 in Ballyhaunis; 200-300 in 7 centres (Clondalkin, Cork x 2, Galway x 2, Knockalishen, Sligo); 100-200 in 10 centres; 5-95 people in 22 centres.

**Self-Catering:** 2 Centres - Dublin, Dundalk; **Capacity:** 276 people; **Residents:** 251

**Reception Centre** (1) - Baleskin. **Capacity:** 369; **Residents:** 225. (Stats: Dept of Justice and Law Reform)

**Separated Children Seeking Asylum** - referred to Health Service Executive, 1 Jan - 31 Dec 2009:

**Total:** 201, of whom: **Placed in Care:** 144; **Reunited with Family:** 48; **Other\*:** 34; **Missing:** 48

\*includes children who arrived on valid visa or accompanied by family members or were deemed to be over 18 years following age re-assessment by ORAC. (HSE - Separated Children's Unit)

**Leave to land** – Between 1 Jan & 31 Oct 2010, some 2,597 persons were refused *leave to land at the State's frontiers and returned to the place from where they came*. (Min Dermot Ahern in the Dail, 17 Nov 2010)

## CHURCH

**One Human Family:** ... 'We do not live alongside one another purely by chance; all of us are progressing along a common path as men and women, and thus as brothers and sisters.' *The road is the same, that of life, but the situations that we pass through on this route are different: many people have to face the difficult experience of migration in its various forms: internal or international, permanent or seasonal, economic or political, voluntary or forced. In various cases the departure from their country is motivated by different forms of persecution, so that escape becomes necessary. Moreover, the phenomenon of globalization itself ... is not only a social and economic process, but also entails... crossing geographical and cultural boundaries. ... All, therefore, belong to one family, migrants and the local populations that welcome them, and all have the same right to enjoy the goods of the earth ...*

Excerpt from MESSAGE OF POPE BENEDICT XVI FOR THE 97th WORLD DAY OF MIGRANTS & REFUGEES (16 January 2011)

**Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People** - Following his recent meeting with Archbishop Veglio, President of the Pontifical Council, Bjarte Vandvik, Sec Gen of the European Council for Refugees and Exiles (ECRE), stated that the Pontifical Council and ECRE share concerns about the general trend of criminalizing migration in Europe, and the hindering of people in need of access to protection as clearly reflected in current detention practices. He went on to say ECRE

*is much encouraged by the supportive approach of the Pontifical Council and I hope this first meeting can open a broader alliance with the Vatican and possibilities for real cooperation in the future.*

ECRE Bulletin, 17 Nov '10 [www.ecre.org](http://www.ecre.org)

## **INTERNATIONAL, EU and NATIONAL ISSUES**

**Long-term resident rights** - The European Council has agreed that beneficiaries of international protection who have lived in the EU for more than 5 years should be able to apply for a Long-Term Residence (LTR) permit. This permit gives the holder the right to reside in another Member State, and the right to equal treatment with nationals in several areas, including access to employment, education, social security/assistance. At least half of the period of the asylum procedures will be taken into account for the calculation of the 5 years required for the long-term residence status. Where the asylum procedure takes more than 18 months, the whole period should be taken into account. The European Parliament is expected to confirm its agreement on the text at its Dec 2010 plenary session.

**Members of the Reception and Integration Agency (RIA)** appeared before the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Health and Children on 12 Oct last, following the visit of some Committee members to Direct Provision (DP) centres in Monaghan and Mosney. The Committee was addressed by a member of the NGO DP Forum which had several representatives at the hearing. While the unsuitability of the DP system as a whole was highlighted by the DP Forum, the lack of an independent appeals mechanism for residents was singled out as needing urgent attention in the interim. Other issues raised by the Committee included length of time taken to process asylum applications, nutrition deficits and inflexibility of meal times, overcrowding and mental health. Responding, Mr Noel Dowling, Principal Officer, RIA, said a complaints recording system would be in place from Jan '11.

Transcript of debate: <http://debates.oireachtas.ie/DDebate.aspx?F=HEJ20101012.XML&Ex=All&Page=1>

**EMBRACE NI** - On 20 November last, EMBRACE hosted an afternoon at Templepatrick Presbyterian Church, where a series of workshops on '*...and you welcomed me*', enabled local church people to learn about setting up language classes and friendship clubs, the value of sharing meals, and about ways to respond to difficult issues such as destitution. A draft EMBRACE document on assisting foreign nationals in need was circulated, and will shortly be available on [www.embraceni.org](http://www.embraceni.org)

## **RESOURCES**

**From Migration to Mobility? Polish 'Immigrants' in Dublin**, Prof. James Wickham (Sociology Research Seminar Series 2010-2011), Wed 8 Dec, 11am -12 noon, Room 3126, Arts Building, Trinity College.

E-mail: [socio@tcd.ie](mailto:socio@tcd.ie); <http://www.tcd.ie/sociology/seminars/>

**Living in Limbo - Forced Migrant Destitution in Europe** – describes the social and legal situation of forced migrants who come from outside the EU and are living in destitution in EU Member States, including Ireland. Researched and edited by Jesuit Refugee Service Europe – [www.jrseurope.org](http://www.jrseurope.org)

**Human Rights Guide for the Civil and Public Service** published by the *Irish Human Rights Commission*, September 2010.

E-copies only - <http://www.ihrc.ie/training/>

**Racial Justice and the Catholic Church**, Bryan N. Massingdale, (Orbis Books, 2010, 17.99 stg , pp 224). This book examines racism in the US and explores how Catholic Social Teaching has been used - and not used - to combat racism and promote reconciliation and justice. (UK Distributors: Alban Books)

**SMA Justice Briefings** - topics include *Migration, Environment ...* [www.sma.ie](http://www.sma.ie) E-m. [jp@ic@sma.ie](mailto:jp@ic@sma.ie)

**Who's who?** - *People Seeking Asylum, Refugees, Migrants*, updated Sept 2010. Cf. [refproject@iecon.ie](mailto:refproject@iecon.ie)

## **TO PONDER**

*We are accustomed to domesticating the Christmas story. We have our Mary dressed in blue, we have our Joseph brown and benign, we have shepherds carrying sheep, we have sweet sounds of carols. Perhaps it wasn't like that at all. Perhaps there was a pair wandering the roads, dusty and exhausted, the woman heavily pregnant, no shelter available and forced to give birth in a shed. Perhaps we should think of refugees rather than Hollywood extras when we imagine the scene. ... For me [Christmas] is about 'the good news to the poor', about the One who has come as light into the darkness...*

Anne Thurston, *Out of darkness*, REALITY, Dec 2008

**For further info on items in this newsletter, contact Sr. Joan Roddy, Refugee & Migrant Project Director**  
SANCTUARY can be accessed at [www.catholicbishops.ie/refugees](http://www.catholicbishops.ie/refugees)