

⚡ Sanctuary ⚡

A bi-monthly newsletter on asylum, refugee and migrant matters from a religious perspective
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No. 65, 31 July 2010

OVERVIEW

Asylum Applications for the two months, May (179) and June (154) 2010, totalled 333.

First Instance: Of 379 applications processed in May/June '10, one (1) applicant was recognized as a refugee at *first instance* and some 246 applicants were refused following interview. A further 84 refusals relate mainly to cases *withdrawn/deemed withdrawn*. Some 48 applicants were returned to the EU country to which they first arrived, to have their application processed there (*Dublin II Regulation*).

Appeal Stage: Of 451 *Substantive Appeals* processed in May/June'10, some 13 appellants were recognized as refugees, some 376 were refused and 62 appeals were withdrawn.

Top Countries of Origin of new asylum applicants in 2010, up to 30 June: Nigeria: 22%; China: 11%; Pakistan: 9%; Moldova: 4%; Afghanistan: 4%.

Backlog of unprocessed cases at 30 June 2010: 1,920 (*First Instance*: 488; *Appeals*: 1,432).

Removals -1 Jan-30 June 2010: Some 411 Deportation Orders were *signed* and, of those, 130 were *effected* (ie 130 people removed from this country). In the same period there were 140 *Voluntary Returns*.

Leave to Remain - In the first half of '10, some 424 people were granted LTR in the country – Jan: 38; Feb: 39; March: 51; April: 95; May: 99; June: 102

Family Reunification (FR): New applications in May/June totalled 58 (with 95 dependants). Some 62 applications (122 dependants) were processed to completion (ie. report sent to Min. Justice).

FR applicants - top countries of origin in 2010, up to 30 June - Sudan: 16%; Somalia: 11%; Iraq: 11%; Afghanistan: 8%; Nigeria: 8%

Direct Provision - 27/06/10; **Centres:** 43; **Capacity:** 6,429; **Residents:** 5,860, in 19 counties; 764 in Mosney; 316 in Ballyhaunis; 200-300 in 9 centres (Athlone, Clondalkin, Cork x 2, Galway x 2, Knockalishen, Monaghan, Sligo); 100-200 in 8 centres; 5 - 95 people in 24 centres.

Self-Catering: 3 Centres - Dublin, Ballaghaderreen, Dundalk., **Capacity:** 362 people; **Residents:** 277 (**Mallow: closed**)

Reception Centre (1) - Baleskin. **Capacity:** 369; **Residents:** 215. (Stats: Dept of Justice, Equality and Law Reform)

CHURCH

Meeting with Ms Mary White TD, Minister of State for Equality, Integration and Human Rights:

On 6 July last, a group from the Catholic Bishops' *Department of Social Issues and International Affairs*, including the Refugee & Migrant Project, met with Minister White to raise issues of concern -

The Direct Provision system - especially the absence of an independent complaints mechanism for people living in direct provision accommodation;

Human Trafficking - the need for stronger measures to counter the demand for sexual services, and the importance of not treating trafficking as a migration or asylum issue;

Separated Children - particularly 444 missing children, still unaccounted for in May '10, and provision of aftercare for separated children when they reach 18 years;

Migrant Workers - lack of a procedure to enable work permit holders change employer;

Environmental Refugees - urgency of the promised Climate Change Bill and for Ireland to meet fiscal commitments made to developing countries dealing with climate change.

The Irish Council of Churches (ICC) & the Irish Inter-Church Meeting (ICCM) have appointed Mr. Mervyn McCullagh as Executive Officer to both bodies. A graduate of Trinity College and brought up in Dublin, Mervyn recently returned to Ireland after 11 years in Indonesia. ICC comprises 14 member churches, while ICCM, a forum for ecumenical debate and action, comprises ICC & the Roman Catholic Church

INTERNATIONAL, EU and NATIONAL ISSUES

UNHCR Global Trends 2009 reports that some 43.3 million people were forcibly displaced worldwide at the end of 2009. This is the highest number of people uprooted by conflict and persecution since the mid-1990s. At just over 250,000, compared with about one million annually in

more recent years, the number of refugees repatriating voluntarily is at its lowest since 1990. Overall refugee numbers remained stable at 15.2 million. In Europe there were 1.6 million refugees, with the main host countries being Germany, UK and France. Asylum applications in the EU in 2009 chiefly came from asylum seekers from Somalia, Afghanistan, Iraq and the Russian Federation. New asylum claims worldwide grew to nearly one million, with S.Africa being the main destination country. The report notes that 45% of persons of concern to UNHCR were children under the age of 18.

Belgium took over the Presidency of the Council of the EU from Spain on 1 July last for the next six months. For the new Presidency, the creation of a Common European Asylum System (CEAS), founded on respect for fundamental rights, with high standards of protection in accordance with the Refugee Convention and other international standards, constitutes an *absolute priority*, alongside fighting against human trafficking and irregular migration. Amnesty International EU Office and UNHCR have urged Belgium to take steps to ensure an effective CEAS by 2012.

The European Commission is referring Ireland to the EU Court of Justice for not having fully implemented, by the 1 Dec 2007 deadline, the EU Asylum Procedures Directive which lays down minimum standards with regard to procedures for granting and withdrawing refugee status. *The fact that Member States apply EU rules differently could affect the whole European asylum system as it may result in lower standards of protection for those fleeing conflicts and persecution. This is not acceptable*, said EU Home Affairs Commissioner, Cecilia Malmström. To comply fully, Ireland still needs *inter alia* to implement requirements concerning the conduct of personal interviews, certain guarantees for unaccompanied minors & the obligation to inform asylum applicants of delays in completing the process.

European Council on Refugees & Exiles (ECRE) Weekly Bulletins – June/July '10 www.ecre.org

RAXEN, the European Information Network on Racism and Xenophobia, requests information for a Study on Racist and Related Hate Crime in the EU. RAXEN National Focal Points: Immigrant Council of Ireland, UCD School of Social Justice & Irish Council for Civil Liberties. cf Stephen O'Hare - stephen.ohare@iccl.

EMBRACE NI - new Development worker, Aneta Dabek, is focusing on connecting with churches at congregational level in order to share good practice and encourage hospitality and integration initiatives. The group welcomes the UK coalition Government's intention to end the immigration detention of children. cf EMBRACE Newsletter #17, Summer 2010, on www.embraceni.org

The NGO Alliance Against Racism (NAAR) - Shadow Report to the UN Committee on CERD - *Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination*. Any organisation wishing to support/sign up to the Shadow Report should contact Marian Tannam, justiceop@eircom.net (NAAR co-ordinating point).

RESOURCES

Becoming Vulnerable in Detention – Civil Society Report on the Detention of Vulnerable Asylum Seekers and Irregular Migrants in the EU - The DEVAS Project - study in 23 EU States, co-ordinated by the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) - cf jrseurope.org & detention-in-europe.org

Polish Migration to Ireland: Newsletter No. 4 - www.tcd.ie/immigration/css/downloads/MCA

A Sikh Face in Ireland: Photographic and Life History Project, produced by FOMACS with Glenn Jordan & Satwinder Singh has been EXTENDED to 5 Sept 2010, Chester Beatty Library, Dublin Castle.

Irish Churches' Affirmations on Migration, Diversity and Interculturalism - formally endorsed by the Irish Churches, with a call for annual self-assessment by Churches in relation to the Affirmations.

www.irishchurches.org; www.iccsi.ie - Adrian Cristea, Parish Integration Programme - adrian@iccsi.ie; tel 01 2690951

TO PONDER

The Gospels spell out the variety of roles and the importance of the involvement of all in bringing about the reign of God. Translated into today's terms, all the baptised – not just ordained ministers or those officially appointed to leadership roles – are called to be co-creators, collaborators in the work of building God's Kingdom. ... Recognising the variety of gifts present, not least those brought by newcomers in the Churches, there must be scope for participation in decision-making and planning as well as in the provision of the myriad services which ensure a lively and life-giving community.

Irish Churches' Affirmations on Migration, Diversity and Interculturalism, p.5. (cf RESOURCES, above)

For further info on items in this newsletter, contact Sr. Joan Roddy, Refugee & Migrant Project Director
SANCTUARY can now be accessed at www.catholicbishops.ie/refugees