

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, March (268) and April (237) 2009, totalled 505.

First Instance: Of 741 applications processed in March/April '09, some 35 applicants were recognized as refugees at *first instance*, some 644 applicants were refused and some 62 applicants were returned to the EU country to which they first arrived to have their case processed there. (cf. *Dublin Convention/Regulation*).

Appeal Stage: Of 385 *Substantive Appeals* processed in March/April 2009, some 26 appellants were recognized as refugees (that is, on appeal, some 26 *First Instance* negative decisions were overturned).

Top Countries of Origin of new asylum applicants in 2009 up to 30 April: Nigeria: 22%; Pakistan: 9%; China: 7%; Zimbabwe: 5%; DR Congo: 4%.

Backlog of unprocessed asylum applications at 30 April '09: 4,218 (*First Instance: 954; Appeals: 3,264*).

Family Reunification (FR): New applications in March/Apr'09 totalled 65 (involving 104 dependants).

Some 71 applications (149 dependants) were processed to completion (ie. report sent to Min. Justice).

Top countries of origin of FR applicants in '09 to 30 April: Sudan: 17%; Iraq: 12%; Nigeria: 9%; DR Congo: 7%.

Leave to Remain (LTR) - from 1 Jan-30 April 2009, some 229 people were granted *LTR* in Ireland.

Removals (deportations) - in the 4 months up to 30 April 2009, some 392 'Deportation Orders' were signed and 86 Orders effected. In the same period, 'Voluntary Returns' numbered 225 and of some 122 *Dublin II* orders signed, some 81 were effected.

Separated Children (Unaccompanied Minors) - In March/April '09, of 33 separated children referred to the HSE, some 9 were re-united with family and 24 placed in care. Of the 33 children referred, some 10 [8 Chinese, 1 Nigerians & 1 Iraqi (5 F/5M: aged 15-17)] are classified as *Missing from Care*.

Direct Provision: At 17 May 2009, 6,275 people were resident in 52 centres (cap: 7,127) in 20 counties - included are 761 in Mosney; 205 - 300 in 10 centres (Athlone, Ballyhaunis, Clondalkin, Cork City, Galway x 2, Knockalisheen, Monaghan, Millstreet, Sligo) and 100 - 186 people in 9 centres.

Self-Catering: 5 Centres (Dublin (2), Ballaghaderreen, Dundalk, Mallow). With capacity for 537 people and some 347 resident, almost 20% of places in self-catering accommodation are currently unoccupied.

Reception Centres - two, both located in Dublin (Stillorgan, Baleskin). Capacity: 459; Residents: 281.

(Statistics: Dept of Justice, Equality and Law Reform and HSE Separated Children's Unit)

CHURCH

What the Bible says about the Stranger - *Biblical perspectives on racism, migration, asylum and cross-community issues* - A revised and expanded edition of this booklet, by Prof Kieran O'Mahony OSA, will shortly be launched in Dublin (8 June) and Belfast (12 June). This resource for parishes, communities, youth groups, schools etc. is published by the *Irish Inter-Church Meeting* and produced by the *All-Ireland Churches' Consultative Meeting on Racism (AICCMR)*. The new edition includes Scripture reflection, prayers, discussion questions and suggestions for dramatisation. Available: Refugee and Migrant Project at [refproject@iecon](mailto:refproject@iecon.ie) (Rep of Irl) and the Irish Inter-Church Meeting at info@irishchurches.org (N.I.)

EMBRACE NI AGM (14 May '09) had as theme *Moving beyond Welcome*. Peter Finch of Calvary Christian Centre, Belfast, gave the keynote address on pastoring congregations of differing ethnic and national backgrounds, including the concept of one church with many congregations. Scott Boldt was re-elected Chairperson, Margaret McNulty, Vice-Chair, Maura McCallion, Sec and Denise Wright, Treasurer.

EMBRACE NI was one of the signatories to a briefing document opposing the UK *Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Bill*, presented to NI MPs at Stormont (20 May). Main objections are around increased demands on new migrants to earn citizenship.
(www.embracweni.org)

The International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC), with partners, has developed & launched (April '09) a *Guide on Ratification of the International Convention on the Rights of All Migrant Workers*

and Members of their Families. ICMC welcomes the *Guide* as a tool to increase awareness of the importance of this Convention and to encourage its further adoption and implementation. ICMC Sec Gen, J.Ketelers, notes: *Especially in hard economic times, the Guide reminds us all that the fundamental rights enshrined within the Convention are not new, but already widely accepted under other treaties, & of practical value, not only to migrants and their families, but to... the whole society.* Cf www.icmc.net.

The US Conference of Catholic Bishops has worked successfully to keep out of the recent *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act* a requirement that would oblige employers to verify that all employees have legal permission to work in the US. Cf *America*, March 9, 2009, p.6. www.americamagazine.org

NATIONAL ISSUES

Migrant Rights Centre Ireland (MRCI) highlights changes that will force migrant workers underground - Under proposed new rules, migrant workers on permits who are made redundant - regardless of how long they have been living and working in Ireland - will be prohibited from taking up a new job unless it has been publicly advertised for two months. According to Fr. Bobby Gilmore, Chairperson of MRCI, *These changes will force migrant workers into undocumented work and push them underground. Forcing people into the informal economy will not create jobs for Irish workers. It will encourage exploitation and will be a loss to revenue. Have we not learned our lesson, he asks, from the Irish experience in the United States?* Cf. www.mrci.ie

Globalisation, Sex Trafficking and Prostitution: The Experiences of Migrant Women in Ireland - Research by the Immigrant Council of Ireland, with the Women's Health Project (HSE) and *Ruhama*, 'presents stark evidence of the trafficking of women into and through Ireland for the purpose of sexual exploitation' and reveals

- over 100 women and girls as trafficked into or through Ireland for the purposes of sexual exploitation over a period of 2 years
 - up to 1,000 women involved in indoor prostitution in Ireland on any given day, of whom between 87% and 97% are migrants
- (cf www.immigrantcouncil.ie)

RESOURCES

Tools for Social Change - A resource guide for community work with migrant workers/families in Ireland, by the Migrant Rights Centre Ireland, with analysis re migration & examples of community work. cf. www.mrci.ie

A Chance for Change - the single protection procedure by Brian Barrington BL for the Irish Refugee Council - this procedure, to be introduced in the new *Immigration, Residence and Protection* legislation, means that asylum/protection applications are likely to be determined more quickly. cf. www.irishrefugeecouncil.ie

Not Just Numbers - Educational Toolkit, produced by IOM and UNHCR and designed to help teachers and other educators engage young people in the 12-18 age-group in informed discussion on migration and asylum in the European Union. Available on www.unhcr.org

Mapping Integration: UNHCR's Age, Gender and Diversity Mainstreaming Project on Refugee Integration in Ireland – 2008-2009 gives an overview of UNHCR's recommendations in relation to integration and explores how refugees themselves experience integration in Ireland. cf www.unhcr.org

New Guests of the Irish Nation by Prof Brian Fanning; Irish Academic Press 2009; pp 228, *interrogates Irish responses to immigration within ...the history of Irish nation-building.*

Directory of Migrant-led Churches and Chaplaincies – For copies: e-mail: refproject@iecon (Rep of Irl) or info@irishchurches.org (N.I.) Also available on: www.irishchurches.org / www.iccsi.ie

TO PONDER

When Jesus sent his disciples out on mission, he told them to be poor, to take nothing with them. And he told them to do things that were impossible for them to do all by themselves. So it is for all missions. Communities and their members are called to be poor and to do impossible things, such as to build community and to bring healing, reconciliation, forgiveness and wholeness to people. Mission is to bring the life of God to others, and this can only be done if communities and people are poor and humble, letting the life of God flow through them.

Jean Vanier, Founder of L'Arche - quoted by Scott Bold in Annual Report at *EMBRACE NI* AGM, 14 May 2009

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

