



(42 page .pdf)

Migration Opportunity Map Project (MOMP)



(28 page .pdf)

Migrants Rights News ~ No: 18

Welcome to the May 2009 edition of Migrants Rights News

The Migrants Rights Network is working for a rights-based approach to migration, with migrants as full partners in developing the policies and procedures which affect life in the UK. Migrants Rights News aims to inform our members and other groups working on migration issues about regional and national policy developments, campaign news, recent research and upcoming events.

At the Heart of Migrants Rights News are the campaigns and strategies being developed by migrants to consolidate their position in British society. We focus on activities that extend the scope of the human, economic and social rights which apply to migrants' circumstances.

We would be happy to circulate information and bulletins sent by members in the following month's newsletter, subject to editorial/space limitations! Please send any contributions to:
info@migrantsrights.org.uk.

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In this month's newsletter, find details of:

(1) Thousands rally in favour of a regularisation of undocumented migrants

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**(1) Thousands rally in favour of a
regularisation of undocumented
migrants**

Whitehall came to a standstill last Monday 4th May, as thousands of people marched to Trafalgar Square in support of an amnesty for undocumented migrants, led by the Strangers into Citizens campaign. There was a vibrant turnout, with faith groups, voluntary organisations and trade union groups from across the UK represented at the event.

The rally was organised by London Citizens through the Strangers into Citizens (SiC) campaign, which advocates a regularisation for 450,000 of the estimated 725,000 undocumented migrants living in the UK. The campaign's specific 'policy-ask' is an 'earned amnesty' - that those people who have been living without papers in the UK for four years or more be given the opportunity to apply for a two-year period of temporary leave to remain, before then being able to apply for citizenship. Other conditions would apply to potential applicants, including proof of a clean

criminal record, references from employers and proficiency in English.

The SiC proposal has been successful in building a strong base of support among many churches and community groups, as well getting some political commitment to the principle of an amnesty for irregular migrants, including from the Liberal Democrats. The London mayor Boris Johnson voiced support for the campaign and recently commissioned an initial [research](#) into the impact of an amnesty for undocumented migrants in London. A full research paper, carried out by the London School of Economics, will be released on 22nd May.

In early June the Migrants' Rights Network will hope to support a continuation of the energy and commitment towards a regularisation of undocumented migrants in the UK that was shown at the SiC rally. We will release two reports (a full report and a summary), which aim to address people's remaining concerns about the nature and impact of a regularisation, with information drawn from independent research in the UK and elsewhere in Europe. Among the questions we will address are: who are the irregular migrants in the UK? What would be the impact on the public purse of a regularisation? Would a regularisation pull more irregular migrants to the UK? What should a successful regularisation programme look like?

The reports will be released on 2nd June, at an event in Parliament hosted by Jon Cruddas. Contact info@migrantsrights.org.uk for more details of this event.

**(2) Extension of Worker
Registration Scheme for A8
nationals**

The government has announced the continued restriction of A8 nationals' right to work in the UK, despite dwindling numbers of migrants coming to the UK from the 2004 European Union member states. The decision to extend the Worker Registration Scheme (WRS) for a further two years followed a [Migration Advisory Committee report](#) released in April.

The requirement for nationals of new European Union (EU) member states - the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia - referred to as the 'A8 states', to register under the WRS has been in place since the EU expansion in 2004. Under the terms of this requirement, nationals of the A8 states have the right to enter the UK for work but must register within one month of beginning work. When they have completed a 12-month period of continuous employment, A8 nationals may enjoy full free movement rights under the Treaty of Accession and no longer have to register their employment under the WRS.

Under the Treaty of Accession of 2003, the UK government has the right to restrict access to British labour markets for A8 nationals until 2011. However it has to justify this by demonstrating that lifting the restrictions would result in severe disruption to UK labour markets. Although there was initially a high influx of A8 nationals after 2004, Home Office data indicates that applicant numbers are now in steady decline - 29,000 people from A8 countries applied for the WRS in the final quarter of 2008, as opposed to 59,000 in September 2007 - a drop of more than half. As such, opponents of the scheme were hoping that the Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) - which provides advice to the government on specific aspects of economic migration

policy - would recommend that the restrictions should be lifted.

But this wasn't to be. Although the MAC reported it to be "very unlikely that removing the WRS would result in any substantial change in A8 immigrant inflows", it pointed out that lifting the restrictions could result in a "little larger" inflow of A8 nationals. Within the current economic conditions, the MAC recommended that the restrictions remain in place for a further two years. Immigration Minister Phil Woolas announced that he was "delighted" to follow this recommendation - no doubt relieved to avoid the political flak that he could have expected from the anti-immigration lobby if he had lifted restrictions.

But this government decision is unlikely to satisfy critics of the Worker Registration Scheme. Although it is supposed to collect data on A8 migration to the UK, it has serious shortcomings. It is likely that some people working in the UK do not register with the scheme, meaning that only part of the picture of A8 migration inflows is captured. There is additionally no mechanism for de-registering from the scheme, meaning that any estimate on how many A8 nationals are in the UK at any one time is a matter of educated guesswork.

The restrictions also limit A8 nationals' access to public benefits and services in the UK until they have completed 12 months continuous employment under the WRS. Those people who experience problems in the UK have little support available and their situation can quickly worsen. Research reports such as that released by the CRONEM research centre at Roehampton University (['Between the Local and Transnational - EU Accession States Migrants in the](#)

[London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham](#)) give a local-level picture of the problems faced by some A8 nationals who have arrived in the UK in hope of employment, but who may instead find themselves homeless, abusing addictive substances or severely ill.

(3) MAC recommends lower skills & pay threshold for senior care workers

The UK jobs that are open to skilled foreign workers through the shortage occupation route came under review in a further [report released by the Migration Advisory Committee](#) (MAC) in April. The review makes critical recommendations that, if adopted by the government, would particularly affect senior care workers by reducing the existing skills and pay threshold would be reduced.

The MAC released its first recommended [shortage occupation list](#) in November 2008; the list was accepted in full by the government for Tier 2 of the Points-Based System for immigration, boasting that the new list would make 200,000 fewer jobs available to migrant workers in the UK. Since then, the MAC has committed itself to regularly re-assess the jobs on the shortage occupation list, carrying out partial reviews every 6 months and a full review every 2 years. It aims to assess whether occupations continue qualify as 'skilled', whether they have a demonstrable shortage of applicants from the UK labour market, and whether it remains 'sensible' to fill vacancies within these occupations with non European Economic Area (EEA) workers.

The MAC shortage occupation review in April points to a severe contraction of the UK economy and ongoing turmoil within the labour force. 2009

has already seen a steep increase in levels of unemployment and an overall decline in job vacancies - most severely in lower-skilled occupations. As such the MAC report considers that there may inevitably be a moderate decline in migration flows to the UK from outside the EEA under Tier 2.

In terms of the role of specific occupations, the position of senior care workers receives welcome revision by the MAC in this report. The MAC November shortage occupation list set a high skill and pay threshold for senior care workers. Trade unions such as [UNISON](#) complained that these thresholds were too high and would therefore prevent many foreign nationals already in senior care work positions from continuing to work in the UK, as well as worsening the existing need for workers in the sector. After reviewing the position of senior care workers, the MAC has now recommended reducing the skill threshold for this occupation from NVQ Level 3 to NVQ Level 2. It also acknowledges the funding constraints of the care sector, recommending a reduction in the pay threshold for this occupation from £8.80 to a more realistic £7.80 per hour.

In addition the MAC specifically recommends removing social workers from the shortage occupation list, except for those working for children and families services. Two construction sectors occupations are recommended for removal from the list. The review revises the list of healthcare and medical professions qualifying for inclusion, including the removal of midwives, occupational therapists and adds cultural professions including orchestral musicians and ballet dancers. It now remains to be seen whether the government accepts these recommendations.

Further MAC reviews on economic migration policy are expected to come thick and fast during 2009, as the impact of migration on the UK labour market continues to be at the forefront of debate.

(4) Academics protest against 'insidious' immigration enforcement duties

The Home Office has come under fire from UK academics, who have launched a [protest](#) against being drawn into the business of immigration control. 68 academics signed an article in the Times Higher Education Supplement in early May, objecting to changes in university and college practices regarding foreign students. Last month's launch of 'Tier 4' - the new route for foreign students to enter the UK - requires universities and colleges which are registered as 'approved sponsors' to increase their monitoring of students' immigration status.

The letter, which follows on from a [protest in the Guardian newspaper](#) in April, reports that it is wrong for academics to be pushed into colluding with surveillance of students and colleagues, through being required to monitor the presence of foreign students at lectures and classes, and checking IDs. Apparently, Home Office guidance has been interpreted differently by different universities and colleges, with management in higher education tending to be "confused and over-zealous" about new responsibilities. The requirements themselves, and particularly their over-application by education establishments, keen not to 'get it wrong', threatens a serious impact on both academic freedom and on the equal treatment of students and colleagues.

The signatories refuse to collude with new regulations, and hope to garner further support through a campaign reportedly building within the University and College Union (UCU). It is expected that the issue of immigration controls within academia will be the focus of attention at the UCU national congress at the end of May. MRN will continue to report on this campaign as developments unfold.

(5) Reports and Research

- [Report of the Independent Monitoring Board on the short term holding facilities at Heathrow airport for the calendar year February 2008/January 2009](#)

The Independent Monitoring Board has released its second report reviewing the conditions of the six non-residential short-term holding facilities at Heathrow Airport. The report covers their monitoring from February 2008 to January 2009 and is based on the improvements they suggested in their original Action Plan. They did observe some improvements and positive innovations; however they note four main points which need to be addressed urgently. These include a lack of sleeping facilities, the excessive amounts of time which people are detained, inefficient escorting between facilities, which creates even longer detaining times and poor supervision of staff, which impacts on the welfare of detainees. The Board urges UKBA and G4S, the contracted managers of the holding facilities, to make improvements as a matter of urgency.

- [A Positive Partnership: The HIV Immigration Project 2003-2009, Positively Women, Asylum Aid and International Community of Women Living with HIV/AIDS](#)

This report reviews the work of The HIV Immigration Project, which ran from 2003 to March 2009 to provide a holistic service to women from abroad living in the UK with HIV. It was a partnership between Positively Women, Asylum Aid and the International Community of Women Living with HIV/AIDS and addressed the gap in protection for women with HIV from removal to their country of origin. After a decision of the European Court in 2008, women living with HIV and who do not have the right to remain in the UK can no longer rely on human rights laws to allow them to stay in the UK in order to continue receiving treatment for illness, leaving even larger gaps in protection of these women. The three organisations worked together to provide a holistic service including legal advice, peer support, group sessions on the immigration and asylum system in the UK and help with access to healthcare.

- [Arrest and Detention of Children Subject to Immigration Control: A report following the Children's Commissioner for England's visit to Yarl's Wood Immigration Removal Centre, Children's Commissioner for England](#)

The Children's Commissioner for England visited Yarl's Wood Immigration Removal Centre in Bedfordshire in May 2008 to report first hand on young

people's, children's and families' experiences of the detention process. 11 Million holds that detaining children is never in their best interest and does not work towards the government's Every Child Matters Framework. The report states the average length of detention has increased from eight to fifteen days, that a larger number are detained for longer than twenty-eight days and that this increase needs to be researched and addressed. It also states that detention of children is not being used as a last resort and is not being kept to the shortest time periods. Concerning children's health, outcomes were found to be lower than the standard expected by the NHS, children's mental and physical health did not seem to inform detention decisions and ill children were kept in detention. Furthermore, provisions for babies and infants were found to be unsatisfactory. The children themselves suggested improvements such as more contact with friends, more play opportunities and activities and better food.

- ['Our Hidden Borders: The UK Border Agency's Powers of Detention, Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission](#)

In response to human rights concerns, the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission has carried out an investigation to see how far human rights inform the decision to detain and how those detained are treated and protected. The investigation involved interviewing UKBA officers and detainees and observing Northern Ireland UKBA operations. Findings of the

investigation include: too much discretion is left to individual immigration officers; more training in human rights is needed for immigration officers at all levels especially those who enforce control; informing detainees of rights to access to legal advice was inconsistent at best; official government documentation given to detainees to explain reasons for detention and their rights is very confusing and not available in other languages other than English; access to interpreters was at times dependent on resources. The report makes recommendations that aim to make the UKBA in Northern Ireland act in accordance with international human rights standards.

- [The Equality Implications of being a Migrant in Britain](#), Eleanore Kofman, Sue Lukes, Alessio D'Angelo and Nicola Montagna, Middlesex University, commissioned by Equality and Human Rights Commission

The foreign-born population in Britain has risen from four to six million in the past decade, but are foreign nationals receiving equal treatment in the UK? The EHRC has commissioned this authoritative and thorough report in order to examine whether migrants can successfully access equal treatment in the UK, putting the spotlight on their access to employment, healthcare, housing, education and criminal justice among other areas. The report concludes that migrants in the UK may be subject to discrimination on a number of levels, not least as a direct result of government

immigration and citizenship policies. This report is an important starting point for a wider discussion about challenging discriminatory aspects of national immigration controls.

- [Review of the UK's transitional measures for nationals of member states that acceded to the European Union in 2004](#), Migration Advisory Committee Report, April 2009
- [Skilled, Shortage, Sensible: First review of the recommended shortage occupation lists for the UK and Scotland: Spring 2009](#), Migration Advisory Committee, April 2009

With thanks to Louise Tero for her input into this section

(6) Upcoming Events

- [Direct Action and Grassroots Democracy](#), Monday 18th May 2009, 9.30am - 4.00pm, Friends House, 173 - 177 Euston Road, London NW1 2BJ

This one day conference hosted by London Metropolitan University, London Civic Forum and Goldsmiths, University of London will explore approaches to community development, grass-roots community campaigning, tactics of social change and non-violent direct action in the current political context through the lens of Saul Alinsky's work. Conference Programme includes contributions from various people including Jonathan Freedland (The Guardian), Maurice Glasman (London Metropolitan

University), Pat Arrowsmith (Peace Campaigner), Nici Nelson (Goldsmiths, University of London), Andrew Wakefield (London Civic Forum), Dinah Cox (ROSA UK), Hillary Wainwright, International Centre for Participation Studies, Bradford University & Red Pepper; Workshops and an Open Mic session
Conference Fee: £25 (wage), £7.50 (unwaged). Booking Deadline: Tuesday 12 May 2009

- [Migrants - contribution, integration, destitution?](#)
Homeless Link, 21st May 2009, London

Migrant populations new to the UK are vulnerable. Without recourse to public funds, and without the right help, there is a high likelihood that they will end up sleeping rough. In November 2008, the Government committed to tackling rough sleeping, with one of the aims targeted at supporting migrant populations. This conference is an opportunity to support this aim and improve the outcomes for these vulnerable groups, by bringing together Local Authorities and voluntary sector organisations to share understanding, solutions and approaches. The event is particularly aimed at exploring the short and long-term support options, as well as the housing, health, employment and benefit entitlements of 3 different migrant groups; these groups being those who are most likely to face destitution: Central and Eastern Europeans, failed asylum seekers, other migrants outside the asylum system.

- ***The economic impact of immigration on London, City Hall, London SE1 2AA, 9am-12.30pm, Friday 22nd May 2009***

Email:

glaeconomics@london.gov.uk

In 2007, London provided a home to an estimated 518,000 irregular migrants. In this seminar, GLA Economics brings together experts in this field to discuss the evidence base used to inform policy development for migration related issues.

Speakers will discuss how immigration and in particular irregular immigration impacts on the UK and London economies. A report will be launched by the London School of Economics that seeks to better understand the potential economic impact of allowing those with an irregular status to become regularised.

Speakers: Christian Dustmann, Professor of Economics and Director of the Centre for Research and Analysis of Migration (CReAM), UCL; Ian Gordon, Professor of Human Geography, LSE; John Hollis, Demographic Consultant, GLA. In addition to the speakers above, Tony Travers, Christine Whitehead and Kathleen Scanlon (co-authors of the report) will take part in a panel discussion. The event will be free of charge and places are strictly limited.

Glad Made Mad, and As the Mother of a Brown Boy: Two plays that explore some of the issues that lead to people from BME backgrounds getting caught up in crime. One Day Only. May 22nd 2009. From 9.30am The Drum Theatre, 144

**Potters Lane, Aston,
Birmingham, B6 4UU.**

To book your place call: 0121 449 4760 or 07826 858985
What makes good people break the law? FREE EVENT. The day includes presentations on criminal justice, gangs and guns, the role of the police and how to support BME communities to avoid breaking the law. This event is FREE and includes a free lunch and refreshments. Glad Made Mad starts at 10.25am - As the Mother of a Brown Boy starts at 1.00pm - Event closes at 4.30pm

- [Sickle Cell and Deaths in Custody Conference 2009](#), De Montford University, Leicester. £130 (inc VAT), 10th June 2009

A sudden death in police, prison or military custody is an important point of scrutiny for the powers of the state, especially when such a death is someone of minority ethnic descent. Sickle Cell is a multi-system disorder that in the UK, predominantly but not exclusively, affects those of black and minority ethnic communities, but is not widely understood. This conference aims to examine the health, justice and human rights issues surrounding Sickle Cell disorders and deaths in custody.

- ***Vulnerable Migrant Workers: The Responsibility of Business, Thursday 28 May 2009, from 5.00 to 6.30 pm***

ECCR and Rathbone Greenbank Investments invite you to attend the launch of ECCR's latest research report, Vulnerable Migrant Workers: The

Responsibility of Business - an overview and comparative analysis of food production, manufacture and retail companies, The report focuses on migrant workers in the domestic economies of Britain and Ireland. Numbers are limited. To reserve a place, please contact Helen Boothroyd: helen.boothroyd@eccr.org.uk, tel. 01325 580028, or Miles Litvinoff: miles.litvinoff@eccr.org.uk, tel. 020 8965 9682. Venue: Rathbone Brothers Plc, 159 New Bond Street, London W1S 2UD. Chair: Mark Mansley, Investment Director, Rathbone Greenbank Investments. Speakers: Antonia Bance, Policy and Communications Manager, Oxfam GB Sunniva Taylor, ECCR Researcher Paul Whitehouse, Chair, Gangmasters Licensing Authority.

- ***Lecture on "The Protection of Vulnerable Migrants in European Law" by Nuala Mole, Director, AIRE CENTRE (UK), 12th June 2009 from 2pm to 5.30pm, President's Hall, Law Society of Ireland, Blackhall Place, Dublin 7***

Topics to be covered include: The protection of those at risk of torture or other prohibited treatment; the protection of those who have suffered abuse in the past (e.g. victims of trafficking); the protection of those with health problems or other compassionate factors; and the protection of children, partners and other family member affected by immigration controls. Please return your registration forms by fax to 00 353 1 672 5927 or e-mail to

emma@irishrefugeecouncil.ie by 22nd May 2009. To register please transfer the registration fee of €75 (€30 concession for students/unwaged/NGO workers) to: Permanent TSB 990602 (sort code) 80024587 (account number), BIC: IPBSIE2D, IBAN: IE11 IPBS 9906 0280 0245 87. Alternatively, you can post a cheque, postal order or bank draft made payable to the Irish Refugee Council to Emma Carey, The Irish Refugee Council, Second Floor, Ballast House, Aston Quay, Dublin 2.

- **Defending Migrants' Rights in East London conference, Hackney Refugee and Migrant Support Group and others, 16th June, time and location to be confirmed.**

This conference will be an opportunity to hear from local groups and individuals about the threats to migrants' rights in East London; discussion will also focus on how groups and activists can better cooperate to challenge these issues. Keep the date! More information about time and location will follow in this bulletin. Contact HRMSG directly if you would like to be involved in planning the conference:

hrmsgroup@googlemail.com.

(7) Other Announcements

- [UN-INSTRAW launches Gender and Migration Virtual Community](#)

The United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (UN-INSTRAW) is launching a new trilingual Gender and

Migration Virtual Community. The virtual community aims to bring together academic experts, practitioners and other stakeholders from all over the world to discuss the issues of migration, remittances and development from a gender perspective, share information and learn from each other.

The initiative is a result of two UN-INSTRAW virtual discussions, held in 2008, in which participants shared ideas about the current approach to gender, migration and development research (September 2008) and exchanged ideas on ensuring that the results of ongoing research have a concrete impact on policy and programming (November 2008). The Virtual Community on Gender and Migration aims to provide a space for ongoing reflection and debate on these issues, as well as the permanent exchange of information and new and existing experiences.

For more information please contact Laura Olsen at:
lolsen@un-instraw.org

- [PICUM - vacancy for part-time administrative assistant](#)

PICUM, the Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants, is a leading European non-governmental organization that aims to promote respect for the human rights of undocumented migrants within Europe, including the right to health care, housing, education and fair working conditions. PICUM currently has a vacancy for a part-time

administrative assistant. The position description is available on the PICUM website.

Ruth Grove-White
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