

Women's Asylum News

Women's Project at Asylum Aid

IN THIS ISSUE

Pp. 2-4. Lead Article:

[The Protection Gap Campaign reaches Europe](#) by Debora Singer, Policy & Research Manager at Asylum Aid

Pp. 4-5. Significant Legal Issues:

[Upper Tribunal guidance on internal relocation in Pakistan for lone women](#)

Pp. 6. Sector Update:

[Chief Inspector's report on asylum casework lacks gender analysis](#)

Pp. 7-8. National News:

[New Home Office COI Guidance on gender and LGBT issues in Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan and Turkey](#)

Pp. 8-9. International News:

[More women and children into EU in 2016 refugee crisis than adult men](#)

[Gender-Based Violence in Tanzanian refugee camps](#)

Pp. 9-11. Publications:

[Women's Refugee Commission: No safety for refugee women on the European route](#)

[ICJ: Refugee claims based on sexual orientation and gender identity - A practitioners' guide](#)

[Centre for the Study of Emotion and Law: New Resource Hub](#)

Pp. 11-12 Events and Training

[Vicarious Trauma](#)

[Risk and Resilience](#)

Pp. 12-13 Charter Update:

[Women on the Move Awards](#)

**[Subscribe to
Women's Asylum
News](#)**

**[Donate Now and
help us save lives!](#)**

Lead Article

Protection Gap campaign reaches Europe

By Debora Singer, Policy and Research Manager, Asylum Aid

On International Women's Day, Tuesday 8th March 2016, the European Parliament passed a [resolution](#) entitled The situation of women refugees and asylum seekers in the EU.

The resolution calls for gender-sensitivity in asylum policy to ensure the safety of women seeking asylum. The author of the report, rapporteur Mary Honeyball MEP said,

“This report highlights the exceptionally vulnerable situation of women refugees in the European Union. They have fled persecution in their home countries, undertaking a perilous journey in order to reach a place of safety. On arrival at reception centres these already vulnerable women, who may be victims of sexual violence, trafficking or other violent crimes, face additional barriers which exacerbate their already vulnerable positions.”

The European Parliament [press release](#) summarises the resolution as calling for:

- Gender-sensitive asylum procedure
- Asylum policies and procedures, including the assessment of asylum claims, need to be gender sensitive, while gendered forms of violence, including but not limited to rape, sexual violence, female genital mutilation, forced marriage or domestic violence should be recognized as valid reasons for seeking asylum in the EU. MEPs also note the need for LGBTI- sensitive reception, as violence against LGBTI people is common in reception facilities.
- The report calls for various measures to ensure that women's specific needs are met throughout the asylum process and in reception centres:
 - » gender-segregated sleeping and sanitation facilities;
 - » female interviewers, translators and interpreters;
 - » trauma counselling for women who have experienced gender-based violence;
 - » childcare during screening and asylum interviews;
 - » information for women on their right to lodge an asylum claim, independently of their spouse and to have a legal status independent of that of their spouse;
 - » gender-specific training for staff; and
 - » legal assistance for women in reception centres.
- End detention of children, pregnant women and rape victims.
- MEPs also reiterate the need to make available safe and legal routes to the EU, in order to improve the security and safety of women refugees and discourage smuggling, trafficking and exploitation by smugglers.

Supporters of the [Charter of Rights of Women Seeking Asylum](#) and its Protection Gap campaign (ADD LINK) will recognise many of these measures. This is no coincidence. In autumn 2015 Mary Honeyball MEP put out a call for information that should be included and Asylum Aid, Women for Refugee Women and Refugee Council were amongst those that responded. On December 3rd the Women's Equality and Gender Equality (FEMM) Committee of the European Parliament discussed the draft report. By then the draft resolution

included two of our recommendations from the Protection Gap campaign in the resolution and three in the explanatory statement. I had the opportunity to stress the importance of all the recommendations and the rationale behind them when I [addressed](#) the FEMM Committee alongside representatives of UNHCR and the Women's Refugee Commission. We then put these forward as amendments. By 8th March all the Protection Gap recommendations were included in the resolution.

The resolution also included a paragraph on detention that very clearly reflects the current [Set Her Free](#) campaign being led by Women for Refugee Women. The full resolution also reflects Refugee Council's policies including their [Let them Fly](#) campaign.

The resolution was approved by the European Parliament by 388 votes to 150, with 159 abstentions.

On the same day, the Government published its [Ending Violence against Women and Girls \(VAWG\) Strategy 2016-2020](#). This covers all forms of VAWG both in a domestic and international context. It has a focus on prevention, provision of services and partnership working as well as pursuing perpetrators. It includes a section on Improving the Asylum System (page 40). Again this mentions most of the Protection Gap recommendations, notably training on sexual violence and its links with memory loss, provision of childcare during interviews, information and female interviewers and signposting women for support services. It concludes that the Government takes the needs of those seeking asylum seriously and will ensure that the asylum process is as gender sensitive as possible by making improvements when and where it is appropriate to do so.

Meanwhile the Home Office continues to make progress with the Protection Gap recommendations. Charter supporters recently met with the Home Office staff including Sarah Rapson, the Director General of UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI). The Home Office staff demonstrated a commitment to working proactively and creatively on the Protection Gap recommendations. Their progress on childcare provision and counselling for women affected by VAWG is particularly encouraging.

The campaign is supported by the Protection Gap Advocates (ADD LINK), a group of women who have experienced the asylum process themselves. We met them through the Evelyn Oldfield Unit which provides capacity building and training to refugees. The PG Advocates were involved in the postcard activity that initiated the Protection Gap campaign. More recently they have produced a leaflet (ADD LINK) to support legal representatives in ensuring that women know their rights and the measures that are available to them. They are also planning workshops for women seeking asylum to share this information with them. In this way the Protection Gap campaign is working on a number of different levels, both directly by reaching women seeking asylum and at a policy level with the Home Office officials.

Asylum Aid's latest [briefing](#) links the Protection Gap measures with credibility assessment. It stresses the double standards if measures available to women in similar situations through international protocols are not available to women seeking asylum. It identifies the interrelated factors that impact on credibility assessments for women: lack of corroborative evidence, reliance on oral testimony and misinterpretation of standard of proof. It stresses that the Protection Gap measures would all enhance credibility assessment and make it more likely that initial asylum decisions were right first time.

Inclusion in the European Parliament resolution gives the Protection Gap campaign recommendations international recognition and status. This enhances the work of the Charter supporters and the chances of the campaign's success in the UK.

Significant Legal Issues

Upper Tribunal outlines guidance on when internal relocation in Pakistan for lone women may be unduly harsh

SM (lone women – ostracism) Pakistan [2016] UKUT 67 (IAC)

Summary: The case concerns a Pakistani woman, SM, who feared return to Pakistan on the basis she would face serious harm by her estranged husband in Pakistan and that as a lone woman with young “illegitimate” children from a new relationship she would face ostracism and discrimination.

The Court of Appeal granted the appellant permission to appeal to the Upper Tribunal, by consent, for a fresh hearing on the basis that the question of ostracism of SM as a lone mother with an illegitimate child had not been properly considered. The Upper Tribunal accepted that the question of ostracism must be considered, however on the facts of the case, especially that SM was in a relationship with her current partner, the Tribunal found that the risk of ostracism did not arise. The Upper Tribunal nonetheless outlined the circumstances when internal relocation in Pakistan for a lone female head of household may be unduly harsh.

Background: Whilst living irregularly in the UK SM became estranged from her Pakistani husband who was abusive and violent towards her. He eventually left SM and the UK to return to Pakistan. SM then began a relationship with a Pakistani man living unlawfully in the UK with whom she now has three children.

After hearing of SM's new relationship in the UK, her husband approached SM's family in Pakistan, abusing them and beating up her brother. In 2010 SM made an asylum claim in the UK based on a fear that if she returned to Pakistan her estranged husband would kill her because she was in another relationship. SM argued that her current partner would refuse to return with her to Pakistan as he would likely appeal his negative asylum decision in the UK. SM could therefore not rely on her current partner to protect her and it would be unduly harsh to expect her to relocate to an unknown part of the country where women of her class and level of education could not live alone. SM believed that as a single woman with illegitimate children “she would be ostracised, treated as an outcast and stigmatised.” if returned to Pakistan.

Decision: The First Tier Tribunal decision had already accepted SM's account that she would be at risk of serious harm by her husband if returned, but rejected her protection appeals on the basis that an internal relocation option was available to her, away from her home town.

Although SM's fear of serious harm was not being challenged in the appeal, the Upper Tribunal found that SM was no longer at risk from her estranged husband because SM had not provided evidence of threats to her family in Pakistan since her initial asylum claim back in 2010. The Upper Tribunal, nonetheless went on to address the central issue of the appeal: what risks social ostracism may present for SM as a lone woman in Pakistan.

The Upper Tribunal considered extensive country information which supported their finding that in some situations it would be unduly harsh for lone women at risk of persecution or serious harm to return and internally relocate in Pakistan. The Tribunal set out guidance as follows at [73]:

- Save as herein set out, the existing country guidance in SN and HM (Divorced women – risk on return) Pakistan CG [2004] UKIAT 00283 and in KA and Others (domestic violence – risk on return) Pakistan CG [2010] UKUT 216 (IAC) remains valid.
- Where a risk of persecution or serious harm exists in her home area for a single woman or a female head of household, there may be an internal relocation option to one of Pakistan’s larger cities, depending on the family, social and educational situation of the woman in question.
- It will not normally be unduly harsh to expect a single woman or female head of household to relocate internally within Pakistan if she can access support from family members or a male guardian in the place of relocation.
- It will not normally be unduly harsh for educated, better off, or older women to seek internal relocation to a city. It helps if a woman has qualifications enabling her to get well-paid employment and pay for accommodation and childcare if required.
- Where a single woman, with or without children, is ostracised by family members and other sources of possible social support because she is in an irregular situation, internal relocation will be more difficult and whether it is unduly harsh will be a question of fact in each case.
- A single woman or female head of household who has no male protector or social network may be able to use the state domestic violence shelters for a short time [...] [but availability at such shelters needs to be considered.]
- Domestic violence shelters are available for women at risk but where they are used by women with children, such shelters do not always allow older children to enter and stay with their mothers. [...] Such temporary separation will not always be disproportionate or unduly harsh: that is a question of fact in each case.
- Women in Pakistan are legally permitted to divorce their husbands and may institute divorce proceedings from the country of refuge [...]. A woman who does so and returns with a new partner or husband will have access to male protection and is unlikely, outside her home area, to be at risk of ostracism, still less of persecution or serious harm

Ultimately the Upper Tribunal rejected the assertion that SM should be considered as a single woman because she was in a relationship with her current partner, a failed asylum-seeker who would be returned with her. She was not at risk in Pakistan of being regarded as a single woman, or an adulteress, and the risk of being subjected to ostracism and discrimination did not arise in her case.

The First-tier Tribunal involved the making of an error on a point of law and was set aside by the Upper Tribunal. The decision was remade by the Upper Tribunal by dismissing SM’s appeal on asylum, humanitarian protection and human rights grounds.

Full case available at: <http://www.bailii.org/uk/cases/UKUT/IAC/2016/67.html>

Sector Update

Chief Inspector's report on asylum casework lacks gender analysis

The Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration published an [Inspection of Asylum Casework](#) on 4th February 2016. The inspection found a number of improvements by the Home Office in efficiency and effectiveness and also identified areas for improvement. However it failed to provide a gender analysis. This was despite input from stakeholders emphasising that one third of asylum seekers are women claiming in their own right and identifying the particular issues that affect women in the asylum process. In addition Women for Refugee Women and Asylum Aid organised a roundtable for the inspector to meet women with experience of the process.

This lack of gender analysis was disappointing. To overcome this, Asylum Aid produced its own [gender analysis](#) of the inspection report, interpreting the findings from a gender perspective. This gender analysis considers the Chief Inspector's findings and identifies those which are likely to have different implications for men and women.

Some of the case examples and report findings involve gender issues. Two cases where material facts had not been effectively identified, established or tested involved gender-based persecution. Two cases where decision-makers failed to assess the credibility of material facts related to gendered issues. However the underlying issues in the cases, namely persecution by non-state actors; inappropriate questions about gender-based persecution; internal relocation and whether trafficking falls within the Refugee convention, were not analysed more deeply.

The inspection found inconsistency in interpretation of the Refugee Convention ground of Membership of Particular Social Group (PSG) to the extent that they recommended 'a second pair of eyes' process for such asylum claims to improve the quality of decision making. Even though the three cases they noted involved a potential victim of trafficking, a victim of sexual assault and a victim of domestic violence, this wasn't picked up as a gendered issue. Those working in asylum law know that a disproportionate number of women's and LGBTI people's cases fall within membership of a PSG. This recommendation is to be welcomed. We recognise its implementation will be of particular benefit to women and LGBTI applicants. Indeed the Home Office is going to focus on cases of female genital mutilation (FGM) as a starting point.

Providing women with the opportunity to choose a female interviewer and interpreter was set up to enable women to feel more able to disclose gender based persecution. Whether the request was made by a male or female asylum seeker was not analysed. This meant the opportunity to find out whether women were benefitting from this process was missed. This demonstrated a failure to understand the purpose of this process on the part of both UK Visas and Immigration and the Inspectorate.

The Independent Chief Inspector has responded very positively to Asylum Aid's gender analysis and Asylum Aid is pleased that he is taking this issue very seriously.

National News

New Home Office COI guidance on gender and LGBT issues in Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan & Turkey

Although women from Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan form a particular social group (PSG) within the Refugee Convention, each case needs to be considered on its individual facts. The Home Office has published new country of origin information (COI) for decision-makers handling asylum claims, with specific guidelines for women from the above countries. The guidelines confirm that GBV and general violence and discrimination against women will not, in most cases, amount to persecution in itself. The Home Office has also published COI for Turkey, based on sexual orientation and gender identity claims.

Afghanistan: The guidelines state that although the government has undertaken positive steps towards empowerment of women through various laws and policies, violence against women is still a serious human rights problem in Afghanistan.

Domestic violence is not explicitly criminalised in Afghanistan, nor is spousal rape. The number of women jailed for 'moral crimes' is stated to have drastically increased, and rape victims are often treated as criminals by the criminal justice system.

Government officials have also been implicated in human rights abuses against women human rights defenders. However, the guidelines state that the general level of violence and discrimination against women in Afghanistan will in most cases not amount to persecution.

The onus continues to lie on the person to demonstrate that she would personally be at risk of gender based violence amounting to persecution or serious harm. This is a recurrent conclusion across the guidelines considered here.

In Afghan cases, it is stated that a grant of asylum will usually be appropriate for a woman who fears gender based violence (GBV) where they have demonstrated the following:

- that there is a real risk of continuing hostility such as to raise a real risk of serious harm in her former home area;
- that they would have no effective protection in their home against such a risk; and
- that they are unable to relocate elsewhere in Afghanistan with regard to the available support or economic means, shelters, and family members in other parts of the country.

Iran: The guidelines stress that Islamic Sharia law in Iran gives women subordinate status to men, and that women often receive disproportionate punishments for crimes. Whilst women in Iran play a considerable role in the public sphere and continue to face systematic discrimination, the guidelines state that this in itself does not generally amount to persecution.

The Home Office acknowledges that effective state protection is unlikely to be available for women fearing GBV. It is also stated that internal relocation is likely to be unduly harsh for many women in Iran. However, the guidelines conclude that each case must be considered on its facts with regard to the availability of state support, employment and family members or friends in other parts of the country.

Pakistan: The guidelines highlight the widespread level of violence against women in Pakistan. It is stated that these take a range of forms including domestic violence, sexual abuse and harassment, acid attacks, forced marriages, forced conversion and honour killings.

According to the guidelines, the police are sometimes unwilling to provide protection for women fearing sexual or gender based violence. Although there exist police stations staffed by female officers, these are few, under resourced and difficult to access.

Women in Pakistan face legal and economic discrimination in areas such as family law, property law, and the judicial system. The guidelines note that although there have been a number of legislative and other measures undertaken to improve the situation of women in Pakistan in recent years, GBV remains a serious problem. However, it is stated that internal relocation to avoid risk from GBV may be viable in some cases.

Turkey: LGBT persons form a PSG within the meaning of the Refugee Convention. The guidelines for Turkey state that most societal violence is directed at transgender persons, particularly transgender sex workers. The Home Office stresses that in general, LGBT persons are not subjected to any action on part either of the authorities or society which would amount to persecution within the terms of the Refugee Convention or otherwise inhuman or degrading treatment.

Within the general framework of the principle of non-discrimination in the Turkish legislation, the rights of LGBT persons are protected and guaranteed by law. The Home Office does acknowledge that there are reports of shortcomings in the way that such crimes are investigated and prosecuted, and crimes against LGBT people may be left unpunished. The guidelines conclude that internal relocation is likely to be possible where a person experiences local hostility.

International News

More women & children into EU in 2016 refugee crisis than adult men

More [women and children](#) are making their way into the EU than adult men as the refugee crisis continues into 2016. According to UNICEF, children and women on the move now make up nearly 6 per cent of those entering Macedonia. This marks a significant change from earlier figures; in June 2015, it was estimated that 73 per cent of migrants were adult males and only one in ten were under the age of 18. UNICEF has acknowledged that women and children are even more vulnerable to the dangers of trying to travel to Europe. Risks at sea are higher for these vulnerable groups. However, UNICEF states that harsh winter weather and rough seas have not 'deterred those desperate enough to make the journey'.

UNICEF has also called for more protection on the ground for these vulnerable groups. Yet the first weeks of 2016 have seen developments indicating that countries are placing priority on keeping refugees and migrants out. Border control measures have been tightened since the start of 2016 and many European Member States are reducing the legal avenues available for refugees and asylum seekers to access asylum.

In response, [UNCHR](#) has stressed the need to reinforce reception capacities at the points of entry to Europe, to allow for the humane and effective accommodation, assistance, registration and security screening of people arriving every day. UNHCR also hopes that Member States will implement EU-wide measures agreed upon in 2015, including the implementation of hotspots and the EU-Turkey Joint Action Plan, at a faster pace. With recent announcements of national measures aiming at trying to appear more unattractive than the neighbouring country, the UNHCR has expressed concerns of a race to the bottom which

undermines the need for a comprehensive European response to the crisis.

Gender-based Violence in Tanzanian Refugee Camps

Women and girls are experiencing [high levels of violence](#) in refugee camps in Tanzania. The ongoing political instability and violence in Burundi has forced the flight of more than 220,000 refugees, of whom half are female. Many experience gender-based violence, including sexual violence during their flight to safety. Recent reports indicate that the threat of violence continues in their country of refuge, Tanzania.

According to [Refugees International](#) (RI), incidents reported by Burundian survivors include rape, sexual assault, physical assault and forced marriage. During a safety mapping exercise at the Nyarugusu refugee camp, several women and girls spoke of sexual violence occurring in or en route to/from latrines and/or showers. Limited supplies of water for drinking and washing result in some women and girls having to walk to a river beyond the camp, where they are at risk of rape and other forms of GBV.

Another risk associated with lack of resources is that women and girls have to travel beyond the camp in search of firewood. In a safety mapping exercise conducted by RI, the forest where women searched for firewood was labelled the most dangerous, due to the frequency with which women suffered rape or sexual assault. Women said that these acts of GBV were committed by both fellow refugees and members of the host population. At least three women reported that they had been raped while searching for firewood, while others spoke of family members, neighbours and friends who had suffered the same. Women and girls who had not experienced sexual violence themselves often travel in groups or ask male family members to accompany them. This does not always prevent violence however, with one man saying ‘some of us encounter larger groups of Tanzanian men and we cannot fight them’.

There is concern that the humanitarian community in Nyagurusu has fallen unacceptably short of minimum standards and failed to adhere to [guidelines](#) to prevent GBV in humanitarian settings. However, it has been simultaneously acknowledged that the humanitarian community is facing enormous challenges in responding to the influx of refugees in Tanzania, creating barriers to meeting minimum standards. Nonetheless, RI stresses that the donor and humanitarian community still have an opportunity to improve the situation of refugee women and girls. Their recommendations include prioritizing the distribution of core relief items that address the dignity and safety of women and girls, and engaging this vulnerable group in consultations to improve safety and security related to camp infrastructure and services.

Publications

Women’s Refugee Commission: No safety for refugee women on the European route

There is little consideration of gender-based violence along the route to ensure safe environments and access to services for refugee women in Serbia and Slovenia. Women’s Refugee Commission has published a [report](#) on the risks for women, girls, and other vulnerable groups. Following visits to Serbia and Slovenia, the Commission has found that protection risks are present at every stage of the European refuge migration, and that opportunities to mitigate risk are squandered.

Women’s Asylum News 134 (February/March 2016)

The report indicates that refugee women and girls are often unable to access basic services in transit centres, including sexual and reproductive care. There is also lack of information and an inability to access interpreters, especially female interpreters. This further hinders women and girls from accessing services, and leaves them vulnerable to smugglers. The Commission reports that government officials are ill-equipped to handle the vulnerable population. The report expresses concern that civil society organisations with gender expertise are excluded from the places where they could be most helpful.

The Commission makes recommendations for the Serbian and Slovenian authorities on improving protection for women and girls on the move. These include ensuring that transit sites are built and staffed in a gender-sensitive manner and providing minimum standards of life-saving reproductive health services. The report also recommends that GBV-specific services, including clinical care for survivors of sexual violence, GBV experts and referral mechanisms be available on all transit sites.

The Commission has called on Serbian and Slovenian governments to collaborate with the EU and UNHCR to take control of the humanitarian response, and put in place policies, services and personnel that will protect women and girls from risks. The report stresses that these protections should be provided from the moment of arrival through to the process of safe resettlement.

International Commission of Jurists: Refugee Status Claims Based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity - A practitioners' guide

Widespread human rights abuses continue to be perpetrated against people based on their real or imputed Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI). The International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) has published a [practitioner's guide](#) to claims to refugee status for reasons of sexual orientation and/or gender identity under the Refugee Convention. The ICJ expresses concern that violent homophobic, biphobic and transphobic attacks are too often carried out with impunity, and that criminal law is often used as a tool of persecution.

The UNHCR recognises that there is growing awareness that people fleeing SOGI-based persecution are entitled to be recognised as refugees under the Refugee Convention. Nonetheless, UNHCR also acknowledges that this area of refugee law remains inconsistent and complex, and is fraught with substantive and procedural challenges. This guide is, therefore, intended to aid practitioners in ensuring that people entitled to international protection for reasons of real or imputed sexual orientation and/or gender identity be recognised as refugees under the Convention.

Establishing SOGI: The ICJ notes that the applicant's testimony may be the only evidence available to establish his or her SOGI. Given the likelihood of emotional trauma, stigma, internalized homophobia and fear and/or mistrust of authorities, among other factors, practitioners should be prepared to deal with a level of inconsistency in individuals' accounts and/or an inability to provide detail. The guide also advises that social and cultural backgrounds may affect how individuals self-identify, stressing that self-identification may not necessarily fit into the conventional, Western understandings of LGBTI experience.

Well-founded fear: In SOGI-based refugee claims, as with any other refugee claims, an applicant may have experienced torture, arrest, prosecution, imprisonment, beatings or other forms of harm, prior to flight. However, refugee applicants whose claims are based

Women's Asylum News 134 (February/March 2016)

on SOGI may have never experienced any of these forms of harm, because their fear was so great that they suppressed or otherwise concealed their SOGI or aspects of that identity. In all cases, practitioners are directed to note that the test to establish whether refugee claimants have a 'well-founded fear' of being persecuted generally requires that the person concerned may have a subjective fear of being persecuted that is objectively justified. The guide advises practitioners to consider a range of factors in approaching the 'well-foundedness' of an applicant's fear. These include not only what the person has experienced in the past or what they fear might happen in the future, but also how they personally apprehend fear and their reasons for it.

Persecution: The guide states that refugee status decision-makers, including Courts and tribunals, appear to find it easier to understand how physical or psychological harm amounts to persecution than intrinsic damage to one's identity, dignity and integrity as a person as a result of discrimination in respect of human rights. One particular related challenge for SOGI-based refugee claims is the issue of discretion/concealment of one's sexual orientation or gender identity. Concealment typically results from fear of adverse consequences, whether at the hands of State or non-State actors. The guide stresses that denying recognition on the basis that the individuals concerned should return to their home country and suppress a fundamental aspect of their identity, such as their sexual orientation, has been held to be inconsistent with the Refugee Convention.

The guide instructs that persecution be understood in broad terms, including serious restrictions on the right or ability of LGBTI people to earn a livelihood and to enjoy private and family life.

The guide also includes information on the other elements of the definition of a refugee under the Convention including membership of a particular social group, and failure of state protection.

Centre for the Study of Emotion and Law: New Resource Hub

Access all Centre for the Study of Emotion and Law (CSEL) publications, including book chapters and published papers, via their new [Resource Hub](#). The Hub includes sections dedicated to papers looking specifically at how [memory](#) relates to the process of seeking asylum, and to the study of [credibility](#) in refugee status determination.

Training and Events

Vicarious Trauma

Freedom from Torture is running a Self-care and Vicarious Trauma course to provide professions with greater knowledge and tools to deal with the risks of working with individuals who have experienced serious trauma. This is a highly in-demand course, running on April 15th.

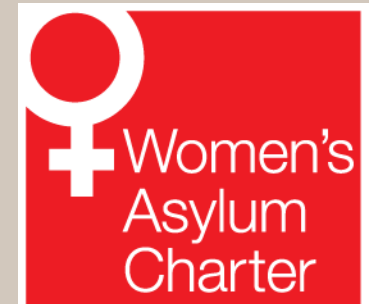
For more information or to book a place, email LHiltz@freedomfromtorture.org

Risk and Resilience Training

Freedom from Torture is running a course on the latest thinking in the field of complex trauma for those working with vulnerable children, young people and refugees. The course aims to help practitioners unpick the complex needs of asylum seekers and refugees who are survivors of torture and other human rights violations. The course comprises of five modules between March and July.

For more information visit <http://www.freedomfromtorture.org/what-we-do/8058/8831>

Charter of Rights of Women Seeking Asylum



Endorsements: 364

Google Group Membership: 180

Women on the Move Awards

At the Women on the Move Awards ceremony on 11 March 2016, inspirational women took centre stage at the Royal Festival Hall.

The awards were presented by Samira Ahmed, with Livia Firth, Phyllida Lloyd, Zahera Harb and Lindsey Hilsum, and were held as part of the WOW (Women of the World) Festival on in The Royal Festival Hall at London's Southbank on 11th March. Music was provided by Woman Asylum Seekers Together (WAST) choir from Manchester- winners of the 2015 Liberty Human Rights Arts Award. This remarkable choir brings women refugees and asylum seekers together in song and raises awareness of the injustices suffered by women who are seeking asylum in the UK.

Mariam Ibrahim Yusuf, originally from from Somalia now living in Manchester, was awarded the **Woman Of the Year Award**. Mariam arrived in the UK in 2008 fleeing war and gender-based violence in Somalia and leaving behind her two children, convinced that they would soon join her. But eight years later, having been detained, destitute and homeless, Mariam is still stuck in the asylum system. Wanting something positive to come out of her experience, Mariam has dedicated her time to campaigning to ensure that asylum-seekers are not forced into similar hardships. A tireless champion for the rights of women who have experienced domestic violence and FGM, Mariam is a source of support and hope for many people who are seeking protection and trying to rebuild their lives. She is not giving up hope of seeing her children again.

The **Young Woman of the Year Award** went to 21 year-old **Seada Fekadu**. At the age of 16 she fled Eritrea and found her way to the UK, via Calais, on the back of the truck, on her own. Without knowing a word of English, she managed to find her way to safety in London, and as soon as she was able to do so, she started helping other young people with similar experiences. In addition to mentoring other young people, Seada is working to ensure their voices are heard in places where decisions are made about their lives. She was quickly granted refugee status and soon started volunteering, becoming a mentor and a role model

Women's Asylum News 134 (February/March 2016)

to many young people. Seada is a powerful advocate for many of those who often do not have a voice and who, like she once was, are children seeking protection and trying to start a new life on their own. She is about to go to university to fulfil her dream of giving back to Britain by becoming a doctor.

The Awards also recognised Citizens UK as Champion of the Year. Citizens UK coordinated the Refugees Welcome movement in 85 towns and cities across the country and successfully campaigned to increase the number of Syrian refugees resettled in the UK in 2015. Citizens UK is the largest broad-based community organising alliance in the UK. Its membership comprises over 300 civil society groups, including schools, faith institutions, trade union branches and universities. The main aim of Citizens UK is to increase participation of civil society in public life, by organising communities to act together for the common good. Citizens UK have been campaigning on refugee and migrant issues for over a decade, but have really stepped up their efforts in promoting rights of refugees and migrants in the past year. The main aim of their campaign is to restore dignity and respect of migrants and refugees.

The ceremony celebrated outstanding media coverage of the protection needs of refugee and migrant women. This year, in memory of Sue Lloyd-Roberts, the Media Award was re-named The Sue-Lloyd Roberts Media Award and went to Jackie Long and Lee Sorrell for their C4 news piece [Inside Yarls Wood](#). Read more about Sue [here](#).

A Parliamentary inquiry followed this special investigation and an independent review into conditions at Yarls Wood detention centre was commissioned. The centre has been branded 'a place of national concern'. The special report exposed the ordeal of many refugee and migrant women detained and mistreated at the detention centre. The report was executed skillfully and demonstrated high commitment to ethical journalism. It brought the sufferings of those women into the public domain. It gave the detained women of Yarls Wood a voice, a strong one to reach out and say 'pay attention to our rights as human beings.'



The WOMA 2016 winners, LtR, Miriam Ibrahim Yusuf & Seada Fekadu

Any views expressed in this publication are those of the authors. Any legal information in this bulletin is intended as a general guide only, and should not be used as a substitute for legal advice. Any contributions from, or references to, external sources (including website links), agencies or individuals do not necessarily reflect the views of Asylum Aid nor receive our endorsement.

All Asylum Aid publications are available at:

www.asylumaid.org.uk

Please forward any information you would like to include in the next edition of WAN to:

media@asylumaid.org.uk

Produced by the Women's Project at Asylum Aid

Asylum Aid
Club Union House
253-254 Upper Street
London N1 1RY

Tel: 020 7354 9631
Fax: 020 7354 5820
Email: womenasylumnews@asylumaid.org.uk

www.asylumaid.org.uk

supported by



N2001/000/SS 1



Women's Asylum News is produced by
Zoe Gardner and Camilla Omollo