

Summary of Meeting 4th May 2021

Key findings about the New Plan for Immigration

- The consultation has been mismanaged by being shortened to a few weeks, having misleading information and phrasing equating asylum seekers with criminals. It is over-politicised and is not evidence led.
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/apr/30/sham-200-groups-criticise-uk-government-consultation-on-refugee-policy>
- Asylum claims should be judged on merit, not how people arrived, and there should be no two tier system.
- The NPfI goes back on the principles that have governed the UK's record of admitting refugees since 1951
- The proposals make no allowance for people with trauma, denying the right to appeal and fresh evidence.
- The proposals will put innocent people into destitution / NRPF – No Recourse to Public Funds.
- Many proposals will be unworkable e.g. returning asylum seekers to the EU.

Facts and Figures

- Asylum seekers formed only about 5% of all immigrants to the UK in 2018. They are a **small part** of overall migration.
- The UK has far fewer applications each year than **similar sized countries** such as Germany, France and Italy.
- Asylum applications in the UK **peaked** in the early 2000s. In 2018 asylum was offered to 15,891 people (www.gov.uk)
- About one in three applications are accepted by the Home Office in the first instance. The final total accepted in 2018 was **46%** (inc. appeals).
- Asylum claims are always assessed by the Home Office and the courts, which require evidence that people have a “**well-founded fear of persecution**” as defined by the 1951 UN Convention.
- In 2017 a study found that the Home Office **mishandled the evidence** in 100% of the 50 cases involving torture which were re-examined. (Source: Freedom from Torture)
- Some claims are processed within **weeks**, whilst other claims take **many years**, in which time asylum seekers are almost always barred from paid employment. In most other countries asylum seekers may have paid work.
- Asylum seekers initially receive **£37.75 per week** to pay for daily needs. If their claim and appeal are refused, financial support also ceases.
- About **2 people in every 1,000** in the West Midlands are asylum seekers.
(Information from the Hope Projects Booklet “When you have to flee”)

Resources and Responses

Various resources are available from the links at <https://wolverhampton.cityofsanctuary.org/>

The Government consultation deadline closes on Thursday 6th May 2021

The Together with Refugees campaign launches on 10th May 2021