

Forced to Flee



Frequently asked questions about refugees
and asylum seekers in Northern Ireland (3rd Edition)

REFUGEE
Action Group



Forced to Flee

Amnesty supporters get the message across at the St Patrick's day parade in Downpatrick
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1. What do the terms asylum seekers and refugees mean?

'Asylum seeker' and 'refugee' are terms with important legal distinctions.

In lay terms, a refugee is a person seeking sanctuary from persecution. In terms of international law, however, a refugee is defined, under the 1951 UN Refugee Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (UN Convention), as a person who "owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality, and is unable to or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country".

The UK and Ireland, like many other countries, have established domestic legal processes to establish if applicants for refugee status fit the 1951 UN definition. In the UK this process is managed by the Home Office. In these terms, an asylum seeker is a person who has applied for refugee status and awaits a decision, whereas a refugee is a person who has had a positive decision on an application for asylum and is granted full refugee status.

There are two further categories of people who are not classed as refugee but might be placed under either Humanitarian Protection or Discretionary Leave.

Humanitarian Protection is leave granted to a person who would, if removed, face in the country of return a serious risk to life arising from the death penalty;



Macedonian women clutch their children as they walk a mountain pass on their return from Kosovo.

unlawful killing; or torture or inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. If a person has been refused asylum he or she may still be considered for this status. Discretionary Leave can be considered for people that have not been considered for international protection. Discretionary Leave may be granted if, for example, the applicant is a child who has arrived alone in Northern Ireland.

2. Why do people seek asylum?

People flee their home countries for a wide variety of reasons: for example, they may be persecuted for religious difference, political dissent, trade union activism, truthful journalism and/or ethnic conflict. Their persecution may range from ostracism to actual abuse or torture or the threat of death.

Sometimes these reasons may be specific to gender or sexuality. For example, certain women may be victims of domestic violence or rape and are unable to seek protection in their home country, or they may be threatened with forced sterilization or genital mutilation because of cultural practices in their country of origin. Similarly, gay men or women who would be persecuted in their home country because of their sexual orientation may flee to the UK to seek asylum.

3. How many people seek asylum in Northern Ireland?

It is difficult to establish the exact number of asylum seekers and refugees living in Northern Ireland as figures are only available for the United Kingdom as a whole. However, the Refugee Action Group estimates that around 2,000 refugees currently reside here.

The Home Office does provide information on the numbers of asylum seekers who are supported on what is now known as Border and Immigration Agency (BIA) support. However, this in itself does not paint a true picture as support is only given to those who are deemed destitute.

LOCAL AUTHORITY	NUMBER
Belfast	160
Lisburn	5
Total	165

Asylum seekers (excluding dependants) supported in Border and Immigration Agency (BIA) accommodation by Local Authority or UK Government Office Region at the end of December 2006. Figures for Belfast and Lisburn.



Entrance to Dungavel Immigration Removal Centre in Scotland

Additionally, it is difficult to assess the exact number of applications made or accepted for Northern Ireland as some applications may have been filed in other regions of the UK and are in the process of being transferred.

4. Where do they come from?

The Law Centre in Northern Ireland has recently dealt with asylum seekers from over 19 different countries, including people from Algeria, Iraq, Sierra Leone, Kosovo, China, Iran, Sudan, Somalia and Azerbaijan.

Across the UK as a whole in 2006 the most common nationalities of asylum seekers were Iranian, Afghan, Eritrean, Chinese and Somali.

Certain events can have a marked impact on the origin of asylum claims. For example, the more recent conflicts taking place in Afghanistan, Iraq and Sudan have led to an increase in the number of applicants from these countries.

At the same time, as conflicts come to an end and countries manage to build peace the number of asylum claims will fall. For example, the conflict in the Balkans throughout the 1990s meant that Serbia and Montenegro topped the table as one of the most common countries of origin - now it is no longer in the top ten.

5. Why do they come to Northern Ireland?

There are a number of different reasons. Asylum seekers

and refugees can reach Northern Ireland in various ways and recent years have seen a significant increase in the number of available routes from other countries both by air and by sea. One of the most common points of access is the border from the Republic of Ireland where it is thought many people might not even realise that they have crossed into another country.

Some asylum seekers choose to come to Northern Ireland because of a family or language connection. For example, the UK as a whole receives a large proportion of Sri Lankan asylum seekers whilst France receives Algerians.

Asylum seekers may come to Northern Ireland specifically to avoid potential conflict with people from their own country who might be present in areas of Great Britain or Europe where there are larger minority ethnic populations. In some cases, the asylum seekers are already resident here when a change in their home country (for instance a military coup) makes return dangerous.

6. Why do asylum seekers not seek refuge in other countries?

Almost all do. The United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) has estimated that two thirds of all refugees are living in developing countries. The UK is home to just 3% of the world's refugees while Africa

and Asia between them host 70% of the world's refugee population.

One example is that of Sudan where four million people have been forced from their homes. More than half a million have fled the country, mainly to neighbouring countries such as Chad. Of those, just 895 made it to the UK as a whole.

Even within Europe, which holds 22% of the world refugee population, the numbers of asylum seekers in Northern Ireland are very small. In 2005 the UK was ranked 14th in the league table of EU countries for the number of asylum applications per head of population.

7. Have children arrived in Northern Ireland without their families?

Although there are few unaccompanied children seeking asylum in Northern Ireland, the numbers are increasing significantly across the UK.

Between 2000 and 2003 the UK as a whole received 15,200 children seeking asylum, 24% of the European total (UNHCR).

Save the Children and the Law Centre have expressed serious concerns over the lack of training within local health trusts to deal with children in Northern Ireland. Only one health trust in Northern Ireland has had experience in dealing with such vulnerable children and the one centre for traumatised children is in London.

8. Have refugees come to Northern Ireland in the past?

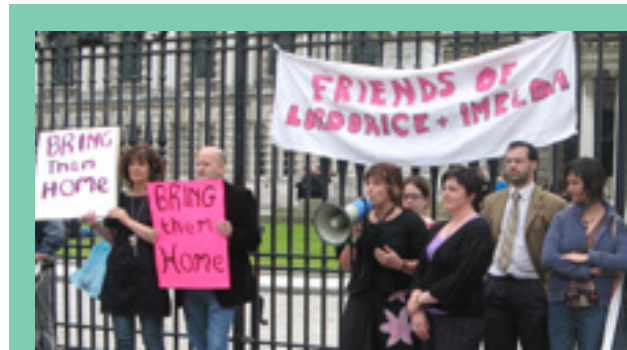
We have a long history of receiving people in flight from fear - Huguenots fleeing religious persecution, Jews fleeing pogroms elsewhere in Europe and, more recently, a small number of Vietnamese 'boat people' and victims of the conflict in former Yugoslavia.

We also have a history of people fleeing from here and we have had the traumatic experience in the last 30-plus years of large internal population movements because of violence and fear. During periods of conflict, extreme poverty and economic decline many Irish people have been forced to emigrate to other countries and this enabled them to begin a new life overseas. Today's asylum seekers are seeking sanctuary from similar problems in their countries of origin.

9. Aren't many claims for asylum bogus?

Like any other legal right or entitlement, the universal right to apply for asylum is subject to abuse and there are those who apply for asylum who do not have a 'well founded fear of persecution.' However, there is no such thing as a 'bogus asylum seeker,' which has become a term of abuse, as everyone has the right to apply for refugee status.

The fact that someone's claim has been rejected does not turn that person into a bogus asylum seeker. Many applications are rejected on 'non-compliance' grounds - for example they may have failed to correctly fill in the paperwork or missed an immigration interview. Some



Anti-deportation demonstration at Belfast City Hall



Anti-detention demonstration at Belfast International airport

asylum seekers may have had to enter the country illegally, by for example using false documents. However, once a person has applied for asylum, he or she is here lawfully while the application is processed.

Home Office statistics for 2002 showed that 34% of asylum seekers received permission to stay in the UK after their initial application, and that 22% of initially rejected cases were overturned at appeal stage. The total number of people being granted protection - either full refugee status or Humanitarian Status (formerly Exceptional Leave to Remain) has increased by 25% since 2001.

Even if an individual fails in his or her asylum application, Home Office figures have shown that while removals of failed asylum seekers are at an all-time high, the number of successful appeals against negative decisions has also increased. It is now thought that one in four appeals against a decision is successful.

In the UK, legal experts in this field now believe that the range of "deterrent measures" introduced by the government in recent years such as a range of new criminal convictions for breaking immigration rules, minimal support for the destitute and the detention of many asylum seekers - means that it is very rare for an individual to claim asylum unless he or she is in genuine need of protection.

10. Are asylum seekers economic migrants?

Economic migrants come to Northern Ireland for different reasons to asylum seekers and refugees. Anyone who moves from his or her home country to improve his or her economic situation can be termed an 'economic

Persona

I am a refugee because the Iranian authorities found out about my political activities on behalf of Kurds. I became active after my father was murdered by the Iranian authorities for his political activities and I managed to escape before they caught me. I did not want to leave my family or my friends, but I had no choice. If I stayed the authorities would have killed me, just like they killed my father. I saw his body and I will never forget how I felt at that moment.

When I explain why I had to leave most of the people are sympathetic, but there are times when people can be rude or nasty if they find out you are a refugee. So sometimes you have to be careful.

Male refugee, originally from Iran

I came from Sudan a year ago because I felt my life was in danger if I remained. Many people had already gone from the place where I lived and those who stayed were being killed. I borrowed money from my family and paid someone who was able to help me get away.

I did not mean to come to Northern Ireland but this is where I arrived and I have to stay here or I will be sent back to Sudan. I have no family here but I have met some other people from my country, which helps. It is hard for me to live here because I do not speak English very well - although I am learning.

Male refugee, originally from Sudan

I left my homeland when I was sixteen. I left my family behind and came here where I knew no one. I felt very alone and homesick. The Israeli regime had taken land that was in my family for generations to accommodate settlers. If I had stayed in Gaza I probably would have been imprisoned or shot. I had to leave my family and the country I love so I could live.

Male refugee, originally from Palestine

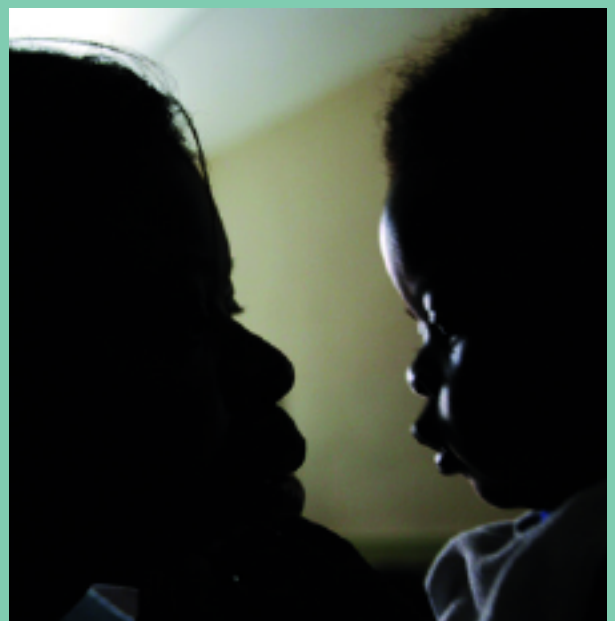
“I left my homeland when I was sixteen.”

My family were involved in a dispute with a powerful local chief. My brothers were killed. I was raped. I went into hiding and then reported the rape and murder to the authorities. After that, they tried to find and kill me. I had to run. I fled Cameroon and came here.

My baby was born here last year. People have been so kind and I have great friends from my church on the Ormeau Road and in places where I volunteer.

But now the Home Office has said they do not believe me and that I will be safe in Cameroon. I am so worried - I can't sleep at night. The doctors have told me that I am suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder. Now I am in a detention centre in England - they are going to put me and my baby on a plane back to Cameroon this week. I am so worried.

Female refugee, originally from Cameroon



© Anna Gordon

Rejected asylum seeker and child

al Lives

I am originally from Zimbabwe. My mother died of cancer when I was young so I lived with my auntie and uncle. In 2005 my uncle was arrested because he worked with the Movement for Democratic Change, an organisation that opposes the government. We never saw him again.

After he was arrested life became very difficult for my family with supporters of the government constantly threatening and abusing us. When more of my relatives were taken away I thought about fleeing to another part of the country but people told me there was no point - it would still be too dangerous.

In the end friends of mine helped me to get out and arranged for me to be trafficked to Northern Ireland.

When I first came here I knew a little English from school but not much. The local refugee support network helped me to get on a course at the Belfast Institute so that I could improve my English. I also received some psychological help.

It was a great benefit for me to be able to learn English properly. Although I am still waiting on my asylum status, I have recently been allowed to work and soon I will start training to become a care assistant, my dream is to one day become a nurse.

Although a few people have shouted racist things at me in the street, it is very rare and I am happy that I have been given chances here that I never thought were possible. If I had stayed in Zimbabwe I am sure I would have been dead by now.

You have to stay strong and not be defeated by what happens to you. I am 22 years old - if I do not have my dreams I will have nothing.

Female refugee, originally from Zimbabwe

“I am proud and
I am willing to work
hard.”

“I was tortured for
several days before
being released out into
the street.”

I left my country because I could no longer feel safe there. The government can do anything to you and no one can stop them. Although I now know that people around the world are trying to do something about it, when you are there you feel as if nobody else cares.

I had been involved in a couple of protests when I was a student and I knew of people who had been arrested but I thought that I would be okay, because I had not been involved in that sort of thing for a few years.

But one day, a group of men arrived at my work and arrested me for treason - they told me that someone I knew had informed on me.

I was tortured for several days before being released out into the street. I was told that I was to await sentencing. I knew I had to leave Iran immediately if I was to have any chance of surviving.

When I was stopped by the authorities in Ireland, they wanted to know if I had been anywhere else first, but I did not have any choice in where to go when I left. I just knew I had to get to Europe. I am glad I came to Ireland because the people here are friendly and many people have helped me - even though it is so cold!

Now all I want is the chance to work. I am an engineer and I have skills that can help this country. I understand that there must be checks on who comes into a country but it seems strange that I cannot work hard and play my part - even if it is to clean the streets. I am proud and I am willing to work hard.

Male refugee, originally from Iran



A returnee at the encashment centre in Kabul takes a break during the long trip home.

migrant', but a refugee or an asylum seeker is specifically fleeing persecution or violence. The ten countries that produce the most refugees have poor human rights records or are places where war or conflict is ongoing.

Migrant workers often come intentionally to fill specific gaps in the labour market and contribute markedly to the economy. Migrant workers have in the past come to Northern Ireland to work in agriculture, medicine and manufacturing.

What asylum seekers and migrant workers, along with settled minority ethnic communities and travellers, have in common, however, are their experiences as victims of racism.

11. Does our benefit system make Northern Ireland a soft touch?

Asylum seekers are not able to claim mainstream welfare benefits. Those asylum seekers who are destitute are entitled to apply for support from the Border and Immigration Agency (BIA) Support, which amounts to about 70% of the basic income support: that is, people receiving these benefits live 30% below the government's own defined minimum subsistence level.

Asylum seekers with additional needs (such as pregnant women, families with young children, people with

disabilities, victims of torture and the elderly) are not entitled to additional special needs provisions on the same terms as UK citizens.

According to a Mori poll (November 2000), most people here overestimate the amount of financial support received by asylum seekers, believing that they receive on average over £110 per week - nearly three times the actual amount.

Example of asylum seeker benefits (2006):

NASS payments to single asylum seeker aged 25+
£40.22 per week

Example of benefits and entitlements for NI residents (2006):

Income support single person aged 25+
£57.45 per week

Single full state pension rate
£84.25 per week

12. Sometimes I see foreigners begging in the streets - are they asylum seekers?

Almost always, no. Asylum seekers have come to Northern Ireland to escape persecution, not to beg. However, as is the case with the local population, a tiny number of people may beg out of desperation.

In November 2006, Amnesty International and Refugee Action launched reports highlighting how UK Government policy on refused asylum seekers does not work and forces many of them into abject poverty. There are tens of thousands of refused asylum seekers in the UK - including some in Northern Ireland, living a hand to mouth existence, reliant on charity or local churches and not permitted to work. Many of them cannot be returned to their country of origin through no fault of their own and are living a life that relies primarily on the charity of others.

The findings reveal the suffering caused by a government policy that cuts off support for refused asylum seekers and has led to a new wave of widespread destitution. Amnesty International is concerned that the government may be deliberately using destitution in an attempt to drive refused asylum seekers out of the country. It believes that it is vital for the government to maintain contact with refused asylum seekers and that financial support should continue until their cases can be resolved.

13. Why do some asylum seekers carry false documents?

Asylum seekers do not generally carry false documentation. But, by virtue of the fact that many

refugees are fleeing persecution by their own government, some are not able to obtain travel documents issued by that government and therefore obtain false documentation to secure travel to safe countries. This is permitted under Article 31 of the UN Refugee Convention. Others have to flee at short notice, and hence may not have had time to gather documents (despite being authorised by the UN Refugee Convention people have been criminalised in the UK for carrying false documents and some are serving prison sentences).

14. Why do some asylum seekers use people smugglers?

We know that some asylum seekers to Northern Ireland have used people smugglers to escape their own country. Home Office research has shown that many asylum seekers are simply 'abandoned' here by people smugglers - and that their intended destination was not necessarily Northern Ireland. As the UK and the EU impose ever tighter border controls to stop asylum seekers from reaching their territories, it becomes increasingly necessary for those wishing to flee to use traffickers and clandestine migration as the only way of fleeing here. This places these already vulnerable people at significant physical risk, as was seen in the case of the eight Turkish asylum seekers (including four children) who were discovered dead in a lorry in Wexford in December 2001. It puts asylum seekers, particularly women, at risk of exploitation by their traffickers.

15. How are asylum seekers and refugees treated in Northern Ireland?

The majority of people in Northern Ireland are welcoming to refugees and asylum seekers. Similarly, Northern Ireland's politicians and media generally have dealt with asylum seekers in a just manner.

However, it is clear that Northern Ireland has a racism problem, which negatively affects asylum seekers and refugees, among others in a minority ethnic community. A study conducted by Refugee Action found that one in five of its clients in the UK had experienced some kind of harassment while 83% of asylum seeking women do not go out at night for fear of being abused and harassed.

16. Are some asylum seekers held in prison in Northern Ireland?

Following a campaign by the Refugee Action Group and others, asylum seekers are no longer held in prison in Northern Ireland, unless they are suspected of committing a crime. Since 2006 immigration detainees (including some asylum applicants) have been sent directly to removal centres in Great Britain. Most are now sent to Dungavel Immigration Centre in South Lanarkshire, Scotland.

A number of people have been taken to Dungavel on the basis that they entered Northern Ireland unlawfully, although this is an inherent hazard of fleeing persecution



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"Kids don't belong in detention centres" says the t-shirt of one young Amnesty campaigner in Australia.

without documentation. There are also those who have failed in their asylum claim.

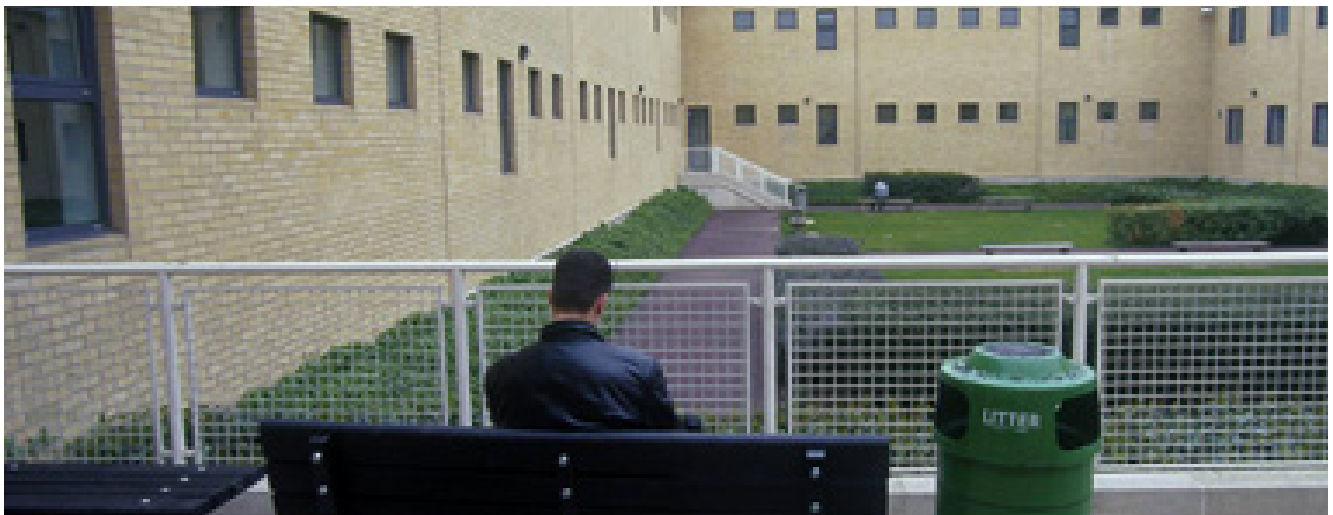
In May 2007, the Chief Inspector of Prisons, Anne Owers, published a report in which she criticised the fact that asylum seekers are often held overnight in poorly equipped police cells in Belfast prior to the journey to Dungavel. She further expressed concerns that asylum seekers were handcuffed while being transported and, perhaps most worryingly, were not always given access to proper legal advice.

So, while detainees are no longer held alongside convicted prisoners in Northern Ireland, the practice of moving them to Scotland has created new concerns. Apart from the other concerns listed here, Dungavel's relatively remote location makes visiting virtually impossible for detainees with family members remaining in Northern Ireland.

The Border and Immigration Agency (BIA) has announced plans to open an enforcement unit in Northern Ireland in the near future and a number of officers have already joined the unit. It is understood that the main role of the unit will be to find and remove those persons deemed to be in Northern Ireland unlawfully, including refused or 'failed' asylum seekers. The Refugee Action Group has concerns that the unit will attempt to remove some applicants who have not yet had their asylum claim finally determined, especially as BIA records are often out of date. Such persons are more vulnerable in Northern Ireland because of the new detention arrangements.

17. Is it permissible under international law for asylum seekers to be detained?

According to the United Nations High Commissioner for



Asylum seekers awaiting deportation from Tinsley House immigration removal centre

© UNHCR/A. Johnstone

Refugees (UNHCR), the use of detention against asylum seekers is "inherently undesirable." Article 31 of the UN Refugee Convention provides that Contracting States (i.e. countries like the UK that are parties to the Convention) should not apply restrictions to the movements of refugees, other than those that are necessary.

UNHCR has also issued specific guidelines on detention, which provide that detention of asylum seekers may only be resorted to, if necessary, in the following narrow circumstances: to verify identity; to determine the elements on which the claim for asylum or refugee status is based; to deal with the cases where refugees or asylum seekers have destroyed their travel and/or identity documents or have used fraudulent documents in order to mislead the authorities of the State; or to protect national security or public order.

Furthermore, where detention is considered necessary the guidelines state that this should only take place where it is reasonable to do so and without discrimination.

Finally, the guidelines also provide that detention applied as part of a policy to deter future asylum seekers is contrary to the principles of international protection and that under no circumstances should it be used as a punitive or disciplinary measure.

Amnesty International has said that it believes that detention of asylum seekers to Northern Ireland is often not being carried out in line with international standards.

18. Do asylum seekers bring health problems to Northern Ireland?

Again, largely, no. In September 2003, a pilot screening project conducted by the UK Immigration Service found that after testing 5,000 asylum seekers for infectious diseases, none carried TB, HIV or AIDS, nor any other serious diseases. Doctors did however find evidence of maltreatment and torture.

19. Could asylum seekers pose a terrorist threat?

The majority of people who seek refuge in the UK are themselves fleeing violent attacks. Many are victims of regimes that the UK recognises as having well-documented records of human rights abuses.

In the course of 2001, a total of over 88 million people passed through UK borders. Only around 80,000 of these were asylum seekers - the rest were visitors, tourists, students or employees. Therefore, focusing on asylum seekers alone would represent a worryingly distorted security reaction and risk provoking hostility against a vulnerable group in an already fragile race relations environment.

In fact asylum seekers are unlikely to break the law in any form. A report by the Association of Chief Police Officers stated that the "vast majority of people seeking asylum are law abiding citizens" and concluded that asylum seekers are much more likely to be the victims of crime than the perpetrators.



Somali refugees are displaced once again when the Tana River floods the Dadaab camps.

© UNHCR/C. Sharpe

20. Is the asylum system fair?

No. The Refugee Action Group considers the current system as being far from fair.

Although the process of detaining people in prisons has largely come to an end locally the method of transporting people to Great Britain represents a failure. The Refugee Action Group would prefer to see claimants housed in hostel-style accommodation where they can maintain contact with family and legal representation in Northern Ireland.

The recent report by HM Chief Inspector of Prisons revealed the extent to which asylum detainees are being held in poorly equipped PSNI cells, handcuffed while being transported to detention centres in Britain and not given access to proper legal advice. The Home Office needs to be reminded that these individuals are not criminals. All too often they are fleeing desperate human rights situations in countries like Iraq and Zimbabwe and come here to assert their legal right to refuge.

According to Amnesty International, the interpretation of the UN Convention is often very narrow; and the complexity of the initial claim form (which can only be



© Gareth Harper

Dungavel immigration removal centre in Scotland

completed in English) means that many asylum seekers have their claim rejected for “non-compliance” - that is, the incorrect completion of the form.

A report by Amnesty International released in February 2004 entitled *Get it Right: How Home Office Decision Making Fails Refugees* also revealed that Home Office asylum decisions are based on inaccurate and out-of-date country information, unreasoned decisions about people's credibility and a failure to properly consider complex torture cases.

From March 2007 the Home Office began implementing its New Asylum Model (NAM) with the aim of creating a faster, more tightly managed asylum process. Although this has meant that claims are indeed processed more quickly, it has also led to fears that claims are not being dealt with as thoroughly.

In Northern Ireland we are particularly affected by the lack of a Public Enquiry Office, which was closed in 2001. The Immigration Service's only current presence is at the International Airport with a limited responsibility. This means asylum seekers have to claim asylum through a third party and there is a lack of clarity as to which section of the Immigration Service should deal with each case.

Finally, there are problems with the constant flow of legislation in this area, which can be viewed as knee-jerk reactions to what is an ongoing, complex issue. There is a need for a concise, single piece of legislation that clearly lays out the procedure of seeking asylum whilst protecting the rights of all individuals concerned.



A disabled Sudanese refugee who fled an attack on his village in Darfur.

Against a background of disquiet over the new Home Office arrangements for the detention and transportation of some people seeking asylum in Northern Ireland, and concerns about a rising incidence of racism, the Refugee Action Group has produced this updated response to questions on asylum frequently asked by journalists, politicians, community activists, teachers and members of the public.

The Refugee Action Group aims to be an independent voice advocating on asylum and refugee issues, and to be supportive to the refugee and asylum-seeking community in Northern Ireland.

Refugee Action Group: Member Organisations

Amnesty International	028 9066 6216	www.amnesty.org.uk/ni
Belfast Islamic Centre	029 9066 4465	www.belfastislamiccentre.org.uk
Centre for Global Education	028 9024 1879	www.centreforglobaleducation.com
Comhlámh NI	003531 478 3490	www.comhlamh.org
EMBRACE	0796 922 1328	www.embraceni.org
Latinoamérica Unida	028 9031 9963	info@latinoamericaunida.org.uk
Law Centre (NI)	028 9024 4401	www.lawcentreni.org
Multi-Cultural Resource Centre	028 9024 4639	www.mcrc-ni.org
NIACRO	028 9032 0157	www.niacro.co.uk
Northern Ireland Committee of Refugees and Asylum Seekers	028 9024 6699	nicras@hotmail.co.uk
Northern Ireland Co-op	028 9335 7500	www.co-op.co.uk
South Belfast Highway to Health	028 9031 5791	www.southbelfasth2h.org/
World Federation of Methodist & United Church Women	028 9028 7566	www.irishmethodist.org/serve/mwi/worldfederation.html

Other useful contacts:

Bryson One Stop Service for Asylum Seekers	028 9043 9226	24hr emergency 028 9024 2025
Equality Commission for NI	028 9050 0600	www.equalityni.org
Home Office, Border & Immigration Agency	0870 606 7766	www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk
NI Council for Ethnic Minorities	028 9023 8645	www.nicem.org.uk
NI Human Rights Commission	028 9024 3987	www.nihrc.org
Refugee Council (UK)	020 7820 3000	www.refugeecouncil.org.uk
UNHCR (UN High Commission for Refugees)	0041 22 739 8111	www.unhcr.ch



"The myths surrounding refugees and asylum seekers can be debunked by accurate journalism. The Refugee Action Group has provided a valuable tool for working journalists whose objective must always be the pursuit of the truth. The NUJ is proud to endorse this publication."