

# MAPPING OF MIGRATION, REFUGEE AND ASYLUM WORK IN AND FROM THE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY IN ENGLAND AND WALES – A REPORT SUMMARY

Von Hügel Institute, St Edmund's College, Cambridge

## Acknowledgements

*Timothy Radcliffe OP has recently commented that Caritas Internationalis is one of 'the jewels in the crown of the Church' and so it has been a privilege for our Centre to work, in different ways, with SCIAF, CAFOD, Cordaid, Caritas Moldova and Caritas Europa in the last year. We are particularly grateful to the board of Caritas Social Action Network for asking us to undertake the present research and for arranging for funding from CAFOD and the Catholic Bishops Conference of England and Wales. Philippa Gitlin has been a superb lead on this project while Bishop William Kenney has been an outstanding chair of our reference group. In Cambridge we must pay tribute to Frances Abao who assisted ably with the telephone interviews and to Dr Judith Bunbury who arranged for Frances to come and work with us around her studies at St Edmund's. We greatly appreciate the input of so many religious orders and parish clergy to our study but special mention for support in recent times deserves to go to Fr Anthony Pateman, Fr Arthur Fitzgerald, Fr Richard McKay and Sr Anne Thompson DJ whose encouragement and friendship is greatly appreciated.*

In autumn 2007 Caritas Social Action Network (CSAN) commissioned the Von Hugel Institute to carry out a national mapping of the work relating to migrants, refugees and asylum seekers being carried out by the Catholic Community in England and Wales. The study was finished in spring 2008.

## Methodology and Definitions

CSAN's main concern was **to quantify, assess and understand the scope and nature of formal Catholic agencies working in this field**. This was the primary focus of the study with the researchers concentrating on CSAN member agencies and those Catholic charities and **religious orders** not yet in membership.

Since CSAN was aware of a number of projects at the parochial level, the study also attempted to capture as many **examples of good practice locally as possible**. This goal was pursued by:

- (i) The researchers contacting every dean in England and Wales using a phone interview to find out:
  - Whether they have parishes in their deanery facing special challenges as a result of migration /refugee/asylum issues;
  - Whether any of them are undertaking particular work to address these challenges.
- (ii) Conducting in-depth phone interviews with parish priests, members of religious orders, diocesan representatives and other individuals suggested by the deans.

The research findings are based on interviews with 444 people including 215 deans, 160 parish priests and 69 members of religious orders and lay people across all 22 dioceses. Questionnaires

were also sent to all Caritas Social Action Network member organisations and to over 300 members of the Conference of Religious. Based on the finding, a 'map' of projects and less structured support to migrants, refugees and asylum seekers across all 22 dioceses has been produced. This is not included into this summary due to considerations of space and confidentiality. For access to this information please contact CSAN or the research team.

The following definitions were used:

**Migrant Worker** – an individual who comes to work in the UK, both from within the EU and beyond. Citizens from other EU states have an automatic right to enter and work in the UK, while those from outside the EU have to seek work permission.

**Refugee** – an individual who owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted is outside the country of their nationality. Someone who has been granted refugee status from the Home Office has a right to reside in this country, which may be reviewed from time to time.

**Asylum seeker** - while an individual is waiting for a decision on their asylum claim, s/he is called an 'asylum seeker'. Asylum seekers are entitled to some social benefits, however if their claim is rejected benefits are stopped.

When referring to all three groups collectively the term *migrant* is used.

## **Overview of the Overall Context and the Church's Response**

### **A note on interview findings**

The interviews with deans suggest that in the majority of dioceses over half of the deaneries are faced with significant presence of migrants and/ or asylum seekers and refugees, which is often reflected in the offering of special pastoral provision. No diocese is unaffected by the issue.

The number of deans that could not provide a definite response about the situation in their deanery in terms of migration is a finding in itself. Out of 215 deans interviewed, 21 could not provide an immediate answer. However, in some cases the study has prompted action: several deans declared they would discuss the question at the next deanery meeting, and some of them got back to the research team with the clearer view of the situation. At least three deans asked whether we could suggest any specific migrant related issues to discuss in their forthcoming meetings. We believe this is an important way of response in its own right, as several of the priests we interviewed stressed the importance of awareness at the deanery level and sharing of ideas and good practices.

At the same time, a number of deaneries, for example in Westminster, Southwark, Brentwood, Birmingham, East Anglia, indicated that most of their parishes have become highly mixed due the influx of migrants, and the response to this is often provided in informal ways with priests, parishioners and religious helping on an individual basis. As time and resource limitations made it impossible to contact every parish, some of this informal help across dioceses may not be reflected in our findings, for which we apologise.

### **EU Migrant Workers**

No full statistical data on the number of the EU migrant workers in the UK is available. However using data from the Office of National Statistics on the number of the EU nationals who have registered with Workers Registration Scheme and information from interviews with clergy we were able to establish the following: Migrant workers from EU accession countries (Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, plus Bulgaria Romania

in 2008) are spread widely across the UK. However the dioceses of Westminster, East Anglia, Northampton, Nottingham and Cardiff have the greatest concentrations. Polish workers account for over 60 percent of all EU accession citizens in the UK.

Our research suggests that most EU migrant workers are in low paid jobs such as agriculture, food factories, retail, hospitality, etc. The view amongst clergy indicated that single East European migrants tend to come to the UK for short term employment with a view of returning home. This results in them living in 'frugal' conditions, especially as they are remitting significant amounts of money to their families back home. However, those with families and children in the UK are more likely to settle more permanently.

### **Other Migrant Workers**

Filipinos and Indians (especially from Kerala) tend to work in health care and in nursing homes and to be more established. However, it is not unusual for Filipinos working as carers to fail to get a renewal of their work permit and be forced to leave the UK, taking their families with them. Some clergy mentioned the presence of 'irregular' migrant workers, from outside the EU, in their congregations but due to sensitivities and issues of confidentiality they were unable to provide details.

In terms of the Church's response to economic migrants' needs the diocese of Westminster has the highest number of structured projects both at parish and diocesan level. A number of agencies are operating in the diocese (e.g. The Passage and Cardinal Hume Centre), and over 20 parishes are involved with TELCO (The London Community Organisation) advocating the rights of migrant workers through 'Strangers into Citizens' campaign. The other dioceses receiving high numbers of migrant workers – East Anglia, Northampton, Nottingham and Cardiff – are also offering some help. This is provided mainly by parishioners, priests and religious on an informal basis. Two exceptions include the Community Cohesion Centre in Wisbech (East Anglia) and EU-funded language classes in Boston (Nottingham). In these dioceses, Catholic Church tends to work in partnership with other churches and community organisations.

Care for migrant workers is present in most other dioceses but it tends to be unstructured and takes the form of networking and providing ad hoc support, with some exceptions. A more detailed overview of structured projects and other support to migrant workers across all dioceses is offered in other sections of this summary.

### **Asylum Seekers and Refugees**

According to the Home Office in 2007, 23,430 applications for asylum were received with 21,660 initial decisions being made. Of those 3,540 were granted refugee status and 15,915 claims were initially refused. No reliable statistics exist about the total number of failed asylum seekers remaining in the UK. The top 10 asylum seeker 'producing' nations are Afghanistan, China, Congo, Eritrea, Iran, Iraq, Nigeria, Pakistan, Somalia and Zimbabwe.

The limited data available from the Home Office on the numbers of asylum seekers by region suggests that most of the asylum seekers and refugees are concentrated in the dioceses of Birmingham, Salford, Westminster, Leeds, Hallam, Hexham & Newcastle and Nottingham, with significant numbers present in Brentwood, Liverpool, Southwark and Cardiff. In most of these dioceses some form of structured response is present, with diocesan agencies and J&P Commissions playing an important role in initiating or contributing to specific projects. In Birmingham, Nottingham and Hallam the Catholic Church is an important partner in ecumenical initiatives such as RESTORE and City of Sanctuary. In Leeds, Salford, Hexham & Newcastle and Hallam the dioceses are involved in caring for asylum seekers and refugees by organising accommodation and providing joint funding for major projects such as REVIVE. In Westminster, day care is provided by Notre Dame Refugee Centre and Cardinal Hume Centre. In Liverpool one

parish was instrumental in helping to develop Asylum Link Merseyside, while the Archdiocese itself funds Support Asylum Seekers (SAS) Fund.

Other dioceses offer informal help to asylum seekers and refugees. Volunteers - members of religious orders and parishioners – work with projects or groups set up by other churches or secular agencies. Overall the Church's support for asylum seekers and refugees is more visible than work with economic migrants. Again, a more detailed overview of structured projects and other support to asylum seekers and refugees can be found in other sections of this summary.

In institutional terms, the most systematic help for all three groups in terms of funding and human resources is provided at the agency, diocesan and religious order level. Parishes and individual members of religious orders help in more informal ways through volunteering and donations.

## **Specific Responses**

### **Diocesan Catholic Agencies' Contribution**

Eighteen of the 28 member agencies of CSAN responded to the questionnaire and of those nine indicated that they offer some type of care or service to migrants, refugees or asylum seekers (see Table 1 in the appendix). Some of the agencies, such as the Passage and the Cardinal Hume Centre, have adapted their core work (e.g. providing shelter and day care facilities to rough sleepers) to include migrants, refugees or asylum seekers as needs have arisen.

However, the time and resources spent serving migrant groups varies from agency to agency. Only two agencies – Brushstrokes (a Fr Hudson's Society project) and Jesuit Refugee Service – reported that over 50 percent of their overall work is directed to these groups, with JRS working exclusively with refugees and displaced persons. Four agencies – most with a large number of staff and volunteers and substantial budgets - spend 25 percent or less of their effort on migrants, refugees and asylum seekers.

The Saint Vincent de Paul Society is increasingly giving support to refugees and asylum seekers through three Support Centres in Newcastle, Leeds and London. As with all SVP projects their doors are open to anyone in need. However work with these particular target groups comprises about 1 percent in monetary terms of SVP's national total.

### **Services Provided**

The CSAN members involved in helping migrants focus mainly on meeting basic needs – providing food, affordable housing, pastoral help, befriending and counselling. Eight out of nine agencies refer their 'clients' on to other relevant organisations that can help more specifically. This reflects good networking among the Catholic, ecumenical and secular agencies. Three agencies provide employment advice, while two homeless centres in London (Cardinal Hume Centre and The Passage) offer some medical care. Four agencies provide English languages classes. The Brushstrokes project, with a relatively modest budget, offers 14 different services to migrant groups.

### **Institutional Capacity and Constraints**

As with all voluntary sector activities funding has been a constraint on expanding work with migrant groups for CSAN members. None of the members has received funding from the Department of Work and Pensions and only one – Brushstrokes – has received National Lottery

money. Although the majority of agencies receive voluntary donations this source of funding is relatively small, the exception being the Cardinal Hume Centre which gets 50 percent from this source. Jesuit Refugee Service is an anomaly in terms of funding, as the Society of Jesus funds 80-85 percent of JRS' work. Three member agencies receive funding from Primary Care Trusts and four get money from their local authorities – Catholic Care Leeds gets 70 percent from this source.

Apart from funding, other constraints include: lack of support from partner agencies such as the NHS, GPs, schools and Job Centre Plus; lack of human resources; lack of expertise; and lack of supportive government policy. One of the agencies stated: *we have difficulties accessing support from the Benefits Agency, the colleges of further education, utilities companies and other statutory services.*

### **Expectations from CSAN**

The agencies working with migrant groups were asked to suggest how Caritas Social Action Network could help them in their work. Most of the suggestions focus on advocacy/ awareness issues:

- Influencing 'draconian' government policy; contributing to a fact-based public policy campaign on the truth about migration and asylum seeking.
- Lobbying and campaigning for better rights for refugees and for asylum seekers, particularly for detainees.
- Making the needs and wishes of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers better known, understood and supported.
- Helping the agencies to promote their service within the Catholic community.

Overall, while the work with migrant groups of some CSAN agencies is commendable, a number of others have not yet used their full potential to respond to the new challenges presented by migration.

### **Parishes and Religious Orders – Structured Support**

#### **A Note on Religious Orders' Contribution**

As we have already mentioned, much of the care and support for migrant groups is taking place through volunteering and donations or other contributions by individuals. This is especially the case with contribution by religious orders.

Many religious orders in England and Wales have an explicit mission to work with the poor and marginalised which include migrants, refugees and asylum seekers. Religious, especially women, volunteer 'anonymously' with a range of groups and voluntary bodies or work on their own – consequently it is difficult to quantify their support for the study's target groups. Both male and female religious serve as chaplains in immigration reception and removal centres providing pastoral help, English classes, translations services and friendship to all regardless of faith. In the wider community they provide food, counselling and access to legal advice.

Specific cases of interventions by individual members of religious orders include but are not limited to:

- The Sisters of Notre Dame and a Daughter of Providence assist the Marists at the Notre Dame Refugee Centre in London's Leicester Square.
- A Daughter of Jesus is an active member of Kent Refugee Support group.
- A Daughter of Charity, a Carmelite, La Sainte Union Sister, and Sisters of Mercy volunteer time at St Wilfred's Centre in Sheffield.
- The Passionist Sisters and the Sisters of the Holy Child Jesus network with and support the Medaille Trust, a charity that works with women and children who have been freed from sex-trafficking.

Many religious orders maintain good connections with parish and diocesan Justice and Peace groups, which often provide them with support in the work they are undertaking. In Southwark, the diocesan J&P Coordinator herself a religious organises events for migrants and asylum seekers in the diocese and has introduced the theme of migrants onto the agenda of the J&P Commission. Individual religious also have connections with secular agencies such as New Link, the Migrant Helpline, the Refugee Council and London Citizens.

While these individual contributions are extremely important, we will now look at the larger scale, more structured projects run by religious orders and parishes, both in collaboration and separately.

### ***Care for Asylum Seekers and Refugees***

Across all dioceses 21 structured projects were identified that support asylum seekers and refugees (See table 2 in the appendix). These include:

- Thirteen drop in/advice centres run by church groups and specific church charities offering a range of support including friendship, advice, English classes, courses and food.
- Two SVP group projects that helps with practical needs and advocacy support.
- One diocesan project providing temporary accommodation for asylum seekers.
- One diocesan asylum seekers support fund.
- Three parishes providing premises and support for ecumenical and secular projects.
- One religious community providing food delivery.

Some of these projects may also have destitute economic migrants as 'clients' as well as asylum seekers and refugees. Harmony House in East London, which provides a range of services, is open not only migrant groups but also to the wider community, thus helping to engender community cohesion.

The projects tend to be funded by religious orders, parishes, Catholic charities or external trusts. In terms of size of funding, religious orders make significant cash contributions to two large well established projects – Revive in Salford and Harmony House in Brentwood. Another example of the Church's financial contribution is the Support Asylum Seekers Fund in the Archdiocese of Liverpool. However, most of the projects rely on other resources, taking advantage of the availability of church premises, volunteering time, in-kind support and donations from the Catholic community including religious, SVP and parish funds. For example, Notre Dame de France, a parish in central London, is providing about £40,000 a year from its own sources to support its Refugee Centre.

On average all these structured projects are run by between 20 and 50 volunteers and benefit between 50 to over 100 people per week.

### **Notre Dame Refugee Centre (Westminster)**

*For the Marist Fathers, work with refugees and asylum seekers at Notre Dame de France parish in London arises naturally from their mission. In 1997 the Marist priests and some members of the congregation who were themselves refugees initiated the Notre Dame Refugee Centre to welcome people into the community and to provide them with advice about the social system or to direct them to other organisations.*

*The Centre's drop-in centre is open twice a week, offering a welcoming place and simple lunches for between 60 and 70 visitors a day. Four days a week, an advice worker provides information and support on matters relating to immigration, benefits, housing and welfare. There is a weekly legal surgery, access to a counselling service and a health team. General assistance is provided with translation, form filling, telephoning, English lessons and access to the internet. Volunteers and staff are particularly aware of the vulnerability of destitute women, and all efforts are made to ensure they are not left homeless.*

*Since 70 percent of the visitors are destitute asylum seekers without access to any benefits, the Centre's volunteers put together food parcels and distribute those as well as second-hand donated clothing. Many asylum seekers are highly dependent on the services of the Centre, with large numbers coming every Monday to collect a weekly food parcel and a hygiene package once a month. Bus fares are partially reimbursed to facilitate them reaching the Centre.*

*Many of the volunteers are drawn from the French expatriate community. The project currently has three part-time employees, a manager, a drop-in centre co-ordinator and a qualified advice worker. A significant part of funding is drawn from the Notre Dame parish itself.*

### **Care for Economic Migrants**

The Church's response to the needs of migrant workers varies. This is partly because only a proportion of Catholic migrant workers attend Mass, and partly because in some areas the Church is still finding ways to respond to their needs. In some parishes there is a perception that economically migrant workers tend to be 'better off than back home'. One parish priest in Portsmouth Diocese noted a lack of willingness among parishioners to help migrants as there is a feeling that 'they are already getting enough support' [from state]. According to him, this is something that should be brought to the attention of the indigenous Catholics community via the Bishops Conference.

We found that not only undocumented migrants, but also those from accession countries are sometimes reluctant at first to share information about their country of origin and the life they left behind. Sometimes this sensitivity comes from embarrassment about the level of poverty the countries are living in. Whether this is the case, or because it takes time to build trust between 'irregular' migrants and clergy, the best strategy according to one of the priests in Hallam Diocese is 'Don't ask too many questions, just walk with them until they feel ready to talk.'

Through interviews with clergy we learned about the harsh working and living conditions of many migrant workers<sup>1</sup>. Migrants who work on farms are especially susceptible to exploitation. Many of these workers live in caravans and are paid cash in hand. In one area, in the South East, this even led to a shortage of £50 notes in general circulation! Poor language skills, long shifts and a transitory life style prevent many from becoming an integral part of the local Catholic community. In some location failure to offer migrant workers a welcome has resulted in them being 'poached' by other Christian churches.

---

<sup>1</sup> See also our previous study: Davis F., Stankeviciute J., Ebbutt D., Kaggwa R. (2007) 'The Ground of Justice', Von Hügel Institute.

The Church's response to migrant workers' needs tends to be ad hoc, informal and on a small scale. We identified only 18 structured projects across all dioceses (See Table 3 in the appendix). These include:

- Three English language projects.
- Six advice and welcoming centres.
- Four projects for homeless (but not exclusively migrants).
- The Medaille Trust, a project helping trafficked women.
- Three diocesan initiatives (Westminster, Portsmouth and Clifton).
- One temporary accommodation project for homeless migrants from accession countries.

We found that Church's work in the area of migration is most often initiated at the grassroots level – by parishes and religious communities that are relying on their own resources to provide services. On the one hand, this is not unexpected as they are directly in touch with those in need on everyday basis. On the other, all our interviewees from these projects pointed out that this puts significant pressure on their resources.

A few exceptions in terms of funding include the Wisbech Community Cohesion Centre, funded by the regional development agency and language classes in Boston, funded by the EU. The Church contributes significant amounts of funding to three projects (St John Southworth Fund, Medaille Trust and St John of God project), in the case of the latter two through religious orders. In terms of human resources, the projects are mostly supported by volunteers.

The most recent diocesan initiatives include the employment of a language coordinator whose aim will be to set up new language teaching initiatives in collaboration with ethnic chaplaincies and members of religious orders (Westminster).

The Parasol Project in Accrington is a good example of a local response to the needs of migrant workers.

### ***The Parasol Project in Accrington (Salford Diocese)***

*Father Martin Saunders is the parish priest for St Joseph's in Accrington. In 2005 he noticed an increase of the newcomers in his congregation, mainly from Poland, and made contact with them.*

*Fr Martin learned that in January 2006, an employment agency recruited 200 Polish workers for an Accrington factory (Express Gifts) and housed them in private rented accommodation. Each worker had to pay £300 up front for the coach trip from Poland to Accrington and for access to a job. The workers had been promised 12 months' work but after 13 weeks the factory terminated contracts leaving 200 people unemployed and threatened with homelessness, but with no eligibility for welfare benefits. Many still owed the agency for travel to Britain. At the same time, the factory continued to recruit more workers from Poland, many of whom lost their jobs after 13 weeks. Some Polish workers were found sleeping rough and many sought help from St Joseph's Church.*

*The housing conditions were expensive and overcrowded. Learning of the high rent levels and threats of evictions Fr Martin had a word with the landlord and in at least one case the tenants were subsequently threatened at knife point and told not to go to their priest again.*

*In one case a Polish woman was arrested for taking food from the supermarket Asda. Her husband had lost his job, they were hungry and had a small baby to feed. The church intervened with a translator who explained the circumstances to the police, who in turn asked Asda not to press charges. The supermarket manager dropped charges and was so affected by their story that he sent a food hamper to the family. In another documented case a worker ended up with a pay packet of £10 for a 72 hour week. This was the result of the employer making deductions at source. The church got trading standards involved who managed to get the direct debits cancelled.*

*In response to these problems experienced by many of the Polish workers Fr Martin, with the help of a Polish speaking parishioner, started to provide information and help. Firstly they produced information and a map of the local area indicating the church, doctor's surgery, the hospital and Citizen's Advice Bureau. Consequently they got a call from the Job Centre asking if they could reproduce the map and other*



information for their clients. The church developed more information and advice and volunteers explained employment rights and countered myths about the police force. The Polish workers started to use the church hall for meetings and set up a self-help group called Parasol (Polish for umbrella). Parasol now employs a part time worker (18 hours/week) who deals with translations of forms into Polish and advice on employment, housing and rights. Parasol has its own website and produces a fortnightly bulletin. ESOL classes are held on Saturdays for those who need to improve their English - the teacher is provided by Lancashire County Council. The police attend the Parasol meetings and regularly provide information and sort out problems.

The Parasol project is 80 percent funded with a grant from Salford Diocese, with the rest coming from the parish and some support from other parishes in the deanery. The project has been taken under the umbrella of Salford Catholic Welfare Services of Salford Diocese, enabling them to use their charitable status.

## Parishes and Religious Orders - Less-structured Responses

Throughout England and Wales many churches have organised informal activities to help asylum seekers, refugees and migrant workers. These local initiatives, usually carried out by priests, parishioners, SVP groups and religious, tend to function without external funding. A number of priests, in areas with high levels of 'irregular' migrants, help individuals with paper work and appeal procedures. Some parishioners provide transport for those needing to attend such procedures and visit government offices.

In some areas of the country, where the influx of migrants is a relatively new phenomenon, priests seem to get less support from their parishioners than in areas that have a more multicultural background. Often in these areas there are no coordinating structures to respond to the needs of newcomers. In such places, clergy and laity from different parishes combine their efforts to provide clothes and cash to help those who are destitute.

Informal or less structured responses can be classified in the following ways:

- **Help on an individual level** – help with finding accommodation, employment, setting up a bank account etc., information about local schools and services, help with transport and English language teaching.
- **Networking and referrals** to other agencies
- **Befriending** – providing friendship and support through drop-ins, mother and toddler groups and homework clubs. Providing tea and chats after Mass.
- **Communities of help** – some parish priests have encouraged specific migrant populations within their parishes to form self-help groups which provide assistance and information to newcomers from their country of origin.
- **Emergency help** – SVP and J&P groups providing emergency help in the form of food and clothing to help the most vulnerable such as failed asylum seekers and unemployed migrant workers.
- **Visiting detention centres and pastoral care for detainees** - parishioners from the dioceses of Arundel and Brighton, East Anglia, Portsmouth, Northampton, Southwark and Westminster are involved in visiting detainees in various centres - Yarl's Wood, Dover, Haslar, Tinsley House, Harmondsworth and Oakington. Some religious also act as chaplains in detention centres.

## Catholic involvement in Ecumenical and Secular Projects

Catholics are involved in a number of ecumenical initiatives, as some clergy and religious pointed out that 'it is best to join already existing ecumenical projects with substantial funding, facilities and manpower'. Parishes and religious support these projects through fundraising,

donating food, volunteering and providing premises. One such project is Restore in Birmingham which enjoys support from all the major denominations across the city.

*Restore was started in 1999, when churches in Ladywood and Edgbaston saw the need to support asylum seekers. Up to that point, most asylum seekers had been accommodated in the South East, but a new government policy of dispersal led to an increase in new arrivals in Birmingham. Since October 2000, Restore has become a project of Birmingham Churches Together. Fr James Fleming from St Catherine's RC parish used to be one of the trustees of the project. The project coordinator says he gets a good response from Catholic churches but volunteers are not broken down into faith groups, so it is impossible to know the exact number of Catholics involved.*

*Restore's key activities include:*

- *Befriending asylum seekers on a one-to-one basis. There are around 70 volunteers from all churches who are involved in this activity. Restore gets about 100 asylum seekers a year referred to them from various agencies across the city;*
- *Hosting social activities for families and adults, including holidays in the summer for families with children (about 150 individuals take part annually);*
- *Raising awareness within the host community, especially through the church network;*
- *Working together with other refugee agencies. Restore shares a building with a secular advice agency which can deal with legal problems;*
- *Advocating on behalf of refugees and asylum seekers.*

Many Catholics join existing secular projects, especially in parts of the country where they are numerically a small part of the population. For example, in the Diocese of Plymouth, a number of parishes support the work of the Devon and Cornwall Refugee Support Council. They make a regular commitment to collect food for destitute asylum seekers which is distributed through DCRSC. It is especially common for members of religious orders to volunteer with secular and ecumenical projects, very often without emphasising their membership in the Catholic community.

In some cases local authorities see the local Catholic Church as a valuable partner with access to large migrant groups. For example, the Holy Cross parish in Eastleigh has been contacted by the Borough Council about the premises for a drop-in centre for migrants. The Migrant Workers Support Network, which was recently set up in Leeds by Unite (formerly TGWU) to defend migrant workers' rights, has made contacts with Diocesan J&P Commissions in Leeds and Sheffield and hopes to collaborate with the Catholic Church as it develops its work. Currently, the Network's key partner in the Catholic community is the Polish community in Leeds.

## **The Church's Involvement in Campaigning and Advocacy**

In addition to practical action, the Church and its individual members have been involved in a number of campaigning and advocacy activities.

### **The Living Ghosts campaign**

Set up by Church Action on Poverty, it was launched in December 2005 with a statement by the Anglican Archbishop of York and 45 other Bishops and church leaders, including nine Catholic Bishops. The group declared that 'it is inhumane and unacceptable that some people seeking asylum are left homeless and destitute by government policies.' More than 40 Catholic parishes have been involved in various initiatives instigated by the Living Ghosts campaign. The dioceses of Hallam and Clifton have been particularly supportive.

## **'Strangers into Citizens' campaign**

Mgr John Armitage from Brentwood Diocese is a founding leader of The East London Communities Organisation (TELCO) which is now part of the London-wide alliance of civil society groups - London Citizens. Mgr Armitage brought a number of parishes into active membership of London Citizens. One of its campaigns - 'Strangers into Citizens'- seeks to regularise the status of 'irregular' migrants. Following the 'Strangers into Citizens' march in London, a Rochdale parish in Salford Diocese organised a similar event with a march from the local school to the church followed by a Mass. At a Mass in Greenwich, London, to which the Mayor and Local MP was invited, the parish priest publicly called for an Amnesty locally and nationally. This appeal was greeted by spontaneous applause from the congregation.

## **City of Sanctuary (Sheffield)**

In 2007, with the support of the City Council, Sheffield became the UK's first 'City of Sanctuary' for asylum seekers and refugees. Sheffield's City of Sanctuary movement is supported by over 70 local organisations, including Hallam Diocesan Justice and Peace Commission, Bishop John Rawstone and four Catholic parishes. These organisations make a commitment to welcome new arrivals and include them in their local activities. They do this in many different ways, including befriending, invitations to community social events and offering short or long term accommodation. Leicester is also now a 'City of Sanctuary', and some local parishes and Catholics are actively involved in this movement.

## **Advocacy by Ethnic Chaplaincies and Parish Priests**

Sometimes ethnic chaplaincies advocate on behalf of members of their congregations. For example Filipino migrants who work as nurses or care assistants can be viewed by employers as easily 'expendable' when something goes wrong. A chaplain to the Filipino nursing community in the Archdiocese of Birmingham brought the issue of their exploitation to the attention of the deanery, which agreed that measures have to be taken.

During the course of this research we heard numerous anecdotes of migrants' exploitation across the country - employment agencies skimming off a percentage of workers' wages, poor working and living conditions. There are examples of individual priests and parishioners coming to the defence of those exploited by the employers. In Sudbury parish (East Anglia Diocese), parishioners helped two migrant workers in 'a slave labour situation' with accommodation and finding another job. After learning about the exploitative practices in a factory near London, the Lithuanian Chaplain, in collaboration with London Citizens and the media, played an instrumental role in improving work and pay conditions for migrant workers.

## **Raising Awareness**

Clergy are well placed to help in the 'conversion of people's hearts and minds'. One priest in Middlesbrough has asked several parishioners, who are newcomers, to speak about their experience as refugees or asylum seekers, their reasons for coming to the UK and how they find life here. These testimonies have been poignant and eye-opening exercises for local people. It is also a way of breaking through the misconceptions and the prejudices that exist even within faith communities.

## Support for Clergy

Having established the extent to which the Church is involved in care for migrants, refugees and asylum seekers on a parish level, we also felt it was important to ask the clergy what support for this mission could be provided by the dioceses and the Church. The key issues include:

- **Strategy and Vision.** A number of priests called for a clear vision and 'overarching strategy' on how to respond to the new times, e.g.: 'A policy on migrants is needed: for example, how often they should be given a possibility to have Mass in native language, some guidelines on how to respond to their needs best, etc. Some joint agreement between all Bishops should be reached on the issue'.
- **Encouragement and Practical Support.** a number of clergy expressed the need for more practical help, for example with language, in relation to church material (Mass sheets, prayer books, Scripture, readings, information on ethnic chaplaincies, etc.) and welcoming signs, especially in rarer languages. Another concern is the need for more information or signposting on issues around the law and housing and how it relates to migrants and refugees.
- **Formation and Training.** The priests we interviewed almost unanimously agreed about the lack of training and formation in the area of ministering to migrant communities, both at the seminary level and on an ongoing basis. This is especially the case with languages, cultural differences, infrastructure of support for migrants, social ministries, relevant aspects of law, and the social sciences.
- **Raising Awareness and Building Knowledge.** There is also a feeling that the Church should keep identifying key challenges presented by migration as well as the areas with significant presence of migrants. In relation to this, 'there is a great need for better awareness on deanery level'.
- **Networking and Sharing of Best Practice.** Many priests called for more networking, collaboration, learning and sharing good practices between parishes affected by migration.
- **Capacity Issues.** Several priests drew attention to the increasing demands on clergy due to the lack of vocations and to the fact that priests are already overstretched. In these circumstances, the importance of engaging lay people into liaising with different communities, including settled migrants themselves and people with language skills cannot be overestimated.

## Conclusion

The international nature of the Catholic Church has meant that it has been able to respond to the new movement of people be they migrant workers or those seeking refuge in the UK. This is because the Church has a geographical presence and that newcomers can relate to an institution they know or have heard of. The work done by many priests, parishes and religious, either on their own or in partnership with other agencies, is truly commendable and often innovative and groundbreaking.

However, this mapping study revealed wide ranging but somewhat patchy responses: migration impacts on every diocese (and in most dioceses over a half of the deaneries surveyed) and yet it does not register on the vision or planning horizons of many. The needs of asylum seekers, refugees and migrants have in recent years been given a high profile by the Church. But this concern and rhetoric is not always translated into practical action. Also, throughout England and Wales, at all levels, the Church has responded to a greater degree to the needs of asylum seekers and refugees than to those of economic migrants.

Thus, the findings from the study read as a mission statement for the Church:

- The need for networking, sharing good practice, and conversation between those who are already working with all groups of migrants within the Church.
- The need for advocacy and funding.
- The need for training, especially of parish priests who are confronted with addressing the needs of a range of newcomers.
- Above all, the need for a strategy at a national and diocesan level to respond to the pastoral and social needs of all migrant groups.

The task now will be for the Church to review its skills, assets and plans in the light of this research in order to respond anew to a need that will, by all accounts, only increase. As one of the interviewees noted, 'Are we doing enough? No. We could always do more. We should never be overly complacent.' A major step in this direction has been the development of Pastoral Guidelines by Bishop Patrick Lynch.

APPENDIX.

Table 1. **Profile of Responding CSAN Member Agencies**

<i>Agency</i>	<i>Scope</i>	<i>Services</i>	<i>Migration related target groups</i>	<i>% Work Directed at M, R, AS</i>	<i>Statutory Funding</i>	<i>Gross Income (£)</i>	<i>Net Assets (£)</i>	<i>Staff</i>	<i>Volunteers</i>
Brentwood Catholic Children's Society*	Diocesan: Brentwood		None	N/A		591,968	580,638	13.7 FTE	
Brushstrokes (Fr Hudson's Society)	Local: Smethwick/Sandwell	ESOL; outreach/befriending; distribution of resources including food, clothing and household equipment	Refugees, asylum seekers, economic migrants, ethnic minorities	50-75	Yes	110,859		6	13
Cardinal Hume Centre	Regional: London	Advice, support, education and training and residential services	Refugees, asylum seekers, economic migrants, ethnic minorities	25-50	Yes	1,799,568	2,638,285	43	26
Catholic Care	Diocesan: Leeds	Mental health - long term; older people community work; learning disability housing long term; adoption, school social work; community development;	Refugees, asylum seekers, economic migrants, ethnic minorities	25 or less	No	3,941,411	5,496,907	150	20
Catholic Caring Services*	Diocesan: Lancaster	Adoption, foster care, residential child care, children's day care, Sure Start. Day, domiciliary care and supported living for people with learning disabilities. Ex-offender resettlement. Community projects work with youth, elderly.	None	N/A	No	4,260,888	720,563	175	200
Catholic Children's Society (Arundel & Brighton, Portsmouth and Southwark)	Diocesan: Arundel & Brighton, Portsmouth, Southwark	Adoption and foster care to children in care; day nurseries and community projects; schools counselling; residential and day care to adults with learning disabilities	Some community projects have high % of ethnic minorities	N/A	No	4,549,000	6,933,000	150: 90 FTE	Few

<i>Agency</i>	<i>Scope</i>	<i>Services</i>	<i>Migration related target groups</i>	<i>% Work Directed at M, R, AS</i>	<i>Statutory Funding</i>	<i>Gross Income (£)</i>	<i>Net Assets (£)</i>	<i>Staff</i>	<i>Volunteers</i>
Southwark)*									
Catholic Children's Society*	Diocesan: Shrewsbury		None	N/A		815,102	318,669	21	
Salford Catholic Welfare Societies, Salford	Diocesan: Salford		Asylum seekers, economic migrants	25 or less	No	418,067	543,041	21	120
DePaul Trust	National	Accommodation with support, training, volunteering opportunities, family mediation, prison resettlement work to young people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless	Refugees, asylum seekers	25 or less	Yes	6,691,000	4,182,000	180	300
Families are Best (CCS Nottingham)*	Regional: East Midlands	Adoption, School social work, Bereavement counselling for children	None	N/A	No	1,532,935	2,493,197		
Families for Children Trust*	Regional: Southwest	Adoption	Ethnic minorities	N/A	No	840,548	334,355	24	20
Hope Family Project (Fr Hudson's Society)	Local: the Heath Town area of Wolverhampton	Support in the home to families; advocacy; parenting, behaviour management; play and learn group; groups for children and young people that address bullying, peer pressure, drug and alcohol abuse, gang culture.	Refugees, asylum seekers, economic migrants, ethnic minorities	25-50	No	146,475		7	6
Jesuit Refugee Service	National	Befriending; referral into other agencies/legal representatives; hardship funds; accompaniment to appointments; meeting space; voucher exchange; social visits	Refugees, asylum seekers	100	No	280,000		9	40
Nugent Care	Diocesan: Liverpool (+ some national residential	Schools, nurseries, children's homes, adult homes, older persons' homes, and a wide range of community services, including supported living. An adoption agency.	Refugees, asylum seekers, economic migrants, ethnic	25 or less	No	20,031,000	14,139,000	850	600

<i>Agency</i>	<i>Scope</i>	<i>Services</i>	<i>Migration related target groups</i>	<i>% Work Directed at M, R, AS</i>	<i>Statutory Funding</i>	<i>Gross Income (£)</i>	<i>Net Assets (£)</i>	<i>Staff</i>	<i>Volunteers</i>
	projects)		minorities						
St David's Children Society*	Diocesan: Cardiff, Wrexham, Menevia	Full range of adoption services to children and families.	None	N/A	No	376,554	230,976	9 + 3 self-employed	1
St Francis' Children's Society*	Diocesan: Northampton	Recruitment and preparation of families/individuals for adoption. Black Families Initiative: recruitment of prospective adopters from BME community for BME children. Young people's groups. Open Door - Birth Relatives Counselling. Birth Families Support Services. Nutcracker.	Ethnic minorities	N/A	No	688,141	1,146,268	20	many
St Margaret's Children and Family Care Society*	Regional: West of Scotland	Adoption - families and children	None	N/A	No				
The Passage	Regional: Central London	Multi-disciplinary day services; hostel accommodation; supported flats for rough sleepers and insecurely housed people with complex needs	Refugees, asylum seekers, economic migrants, ethnic minorities	25-50	No	111,388	3,304,589	90	200



**Table 2. Projects Supporting Asylum Seekers and Refugees across Dioceses (Spring 2008)**

<b>Project</b>	<b>Project initiator</b>	<b>Funding (amount and sources)</b>	<b>Number of staff/volunteers</b>	<b>Number of people helped</b>	<b>Premises</b>
REVIVE project (Salford)	Diocese and Congregation of the Holy Spirit	£85,000; Congregation of the Holy Spirit (core funders), the Tudor Trust, the Church Urban Fund and Catholic parishes	3 staff, 8 volunteers and 5 social work placement students	55 / week and 30 casework asylum seekers	Parish (run by the Congregation of the Holy Spirit)
Liverpool Archdiocese Lenten Appeal	Archdiocese	For the last three years the Archdiocese donated Lenten Alms to Support Asylum Seekers (SAS) Fund: £19,000, £20,000 and £25,000 respectively	N/A		N/A
Asylum Seeker and Refugee Project – 6 drop in centres (Hexham & Newcastle)	Diocese	£331,000 (in the last 7 years): 25% from Catholic Charitable Trusts, 65% from other charitable trusts, 4.5% from Newcastle city council, 2% from Catholic Women’s League, 2% from religious orders, the rest – donations	1.5 staff, 30 volunteers	120/ week	Parishes
Abigail Housing set up by JCP (Leeds Diocese)	Diocese	£20,000 from local and national charitable trusts and the Church Urban Fund; £2,500 via Bishop’s Lenten appeal to parishes	2 part-time staff, 2 volunteers	20 AS currently provided with accommodation	The Diocese provides a house in Bradford
Harmony House, Dagenham (Brentwood)	Religious community	Approximately 24% of funding from The Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Mary	30 staff, 4 volunteers	About 170 asylum seekers attend various classes 70 children, including those of asylum seekers and refugees, attend Childhood Centre	Purpose built premises provided by sisters of the Sacred Heart
Notre Dame Refugee Centre in London (Westminster)	Parish/ religious community	£135,000 (2007): £41,000 from Notre Dame de France Church and 10-15% of the rest from religious orders and other Catholic sources	3 part-time staff, 25 volunteers	60-70/day, 2 days a week	Parish

Poitiers food delivery project in Southampton (Portsmouth Diocese)	Religious community	£1,000/ month by SMM; also parishes and school donations	3 staff, 8 volunteers	1,200 meals to 160 people every week with a further 140 meals to 22 destitute asylum seekers once a month	Poitiers Centre
St Wilfred's Day Centre (Hallam)	Parish	£250,000 p.a., through fundraising	100 volunteers	50-80/ day	Provided by Hallam Caring Services
St Nicholas of Tolentino in Bristol (Clifton):  Parish ministry and drop in centre by Bristol Refugee Rights	Parish (parish ministry)  Bristol Refugee Rights and the parish (drop in centre)	Parish funds; donations from SVP conferences.  None from Catholic sources	Over 30 parishioners (volunteers) and a Daughter of Charity  3 parishioners and a Daughter of Charity volunteer	100/week	Parish  Parish
Drop in centre at Blessed Sacrament parish in Leicester (Nottingham)	Parish	Parish	15-20 volunteers	100/ day, once a week (asylum seekers and migrants)	Parish hall
SVP Conference in St Leonards (Arundel and Brighton)	SVP members	85% from Catholic sources	9 volunteers	70 asylum seekers and migrants last year (755 visits)	Primary Care Trust, Baptist Church
Furniture supply project in Halifax area (Leeds)	SVP members	Occasional small grants and donations	10 volunteers	50 asylum seekers a year	N/A
Asylum Link in Merseyside and Pre and Post Natal Support Group (Liverpool)	Asylum Link with parish	Tudor Trust, Lloyds Bank and other trusts; Liverpool Archdiocese (annually via Lenten appeal to SAS Fund); food donations from Nugent Care, some support from SVP conferences	6 staff, 48 volunteers including a Notre Dame sister (Asylum Link)	160/ day, 5days a week; 450 pregnant women helped so far	Premises provided by St Anne's and St Bernard's
Solihull Welcome drop-in centre (Birmingham)	Parish/ religious sister	Churches Together in Central Solihull, St Alphege (C of E) Church, Solihull Churches Action on Homelessness, Restore, donations	50 volunteers from 14 churches	20-40 / week	St Augustine's parish hall in Solihull
St Vincent's Support Centre, Leeds (Similar	SVP	Leeds Asylum Seekers Support Network, various charitable trusts,	14 staff, 30 volunteers	hardship payments to 18 asylum seekers, about 12 attend	

centres are being set up in Newcastle and London)		other funds and sources		ESOL classes 5 times a week, a number are helped with advice, clothing etc	
Homeless drop-in project, St Francis of Assisi in Stratford (Brentwood)	Parish	Parish contributions	Up to 10 volunteers	10 or more per day	Parish hall

**Table 3. Migrant Support Projects across Dioceses (Spring 2008)**

	<b>Project initiator</b>	<b>Funding (amount and sources)</b>	<b>Number of staff/volunteers</b>	<b>Number of people helped</b>	<b>Premises</b>
Language classes for newcomers (Brentwood)	Diocese and RAMFEL	None	1 ESOL teacher provided by RAMFEL free of charge	Expected to have 10 adults at each centre; planned to expand to other schools and reach up to 140 beneficiaries	Three RC schools in Brentwood free of charge
Language teaching coordinator post for 6 months (Westminster Diocese)	Diocese	Not decided, diocese	1 staff	N/A	Diocese
St John Southworth Fund	Diocese	Accumulated legacies across the diocese			
Migrants Task Group (Portsmouth)	Diocese	£6,000 from diocese	4 volunteers	N/A	N/A
Directory of pastoral and social services (Clifton)	Diocese	Self funding from advertising	Led by Tom Hopwood, Diocesan Press Officer	N/A	N/A
St John of God Migrant Worker Project (hostel for the homeless) (Westminster)	St John of God Brothers, The Passage Day Centre and Poor Servants of the Mother of God	Refurbishment and start-up costs covered by Poor Servants of the Mother of God	N/A	40 beds	Property leased from the Poor Servants of the Mother of God
Welcome Centre, Jersey (Portsmouth)	Deanery	£250,000 on initial capital expenditure, from fundraising	One manager	2000 individuals attended language classes so far	Former school
Parasol (advice centre) in Accrington (Salford)	Parish	£12,000 per annum; 20% from parish, 80% from diocese	1 part-time, 8 volunteers	About 300 per year	Parish hall

Parasol (advice centre) project in Holy Saviour Parish, Nelson (Salford)	Parish	Start- up money from Police	Starting now with help from Parasol in Accrington	N/A	Parish hall
Wisbech Community Cohesion Centre (East Anglia)	Parish	EEDA, Fenland Links, Lankelly Chase, Yong Lives, CoWA, fundraising	3 staff (1 from parish), 15-20 volunteers (almost all parishioners)	30-40 / week plus 20-30 attending weekly English classes	Premises leased from diocese
Language classes in Boston (Nottingham)	Polish parishioner	EU	3 volunteers (local parishioners)	80/ week	Parish hall
St Ignatius in Stamford Hill – sandwich run and advice (Westminster)	Religious community	£4,000 annually, provided by the community	1 full-time and 1 part-time, varying numbers of volunteers	30/day are served food, about 15 helped regularly with advice etc.	St Ignatius Church
Brook Green parish – sandwich run and advice (Westminster)	Parish	Parish	5 volunteers	20-30/ day, five days a week; mostly migrants	Parish hall
Camden Town parish – food for homeless and emergency help (Westminster)	Parish	Parish	40 volunteers	70-80 / day (incl. migrants and refugees), 4 days a week Many migrants at cold weather shelter	Parish hall for daily sandwiches; Anglican church rented for £3,000 for cold weather shelter
Open House homeless project, St Patrick's Soho Square (Westminster)	Parish	Parish	20 volunteers and 91 cooks	70-85 people per week, about 75% migrants	Parish hall
St Marie on the Sands homeless project in Southport (Liverpool)	Parish	Parish, local schools	20-30 volunteers	200/ week, 10-20% migrants	Parish hall
Franciscan Friars of Renewal in Bradford – food for homeless and emergency help (Leeds)	Religious community	Religious community, donations from schools and local businesses	Friars and volunteers	10% migrants	Friary
Medaille Trust	National remit supported by several religious orders	£250,000 per year per house; 99% comes from Catholic sources, mainly religious orders	36-40 staff and 10 volunteers (5 lay people and 5 religious)	40 women and their babies have been helped since 2007	The two houses were donated by a Catholic couple and by the Sisters of Charity