Factsheet: Asylum and Detention

GLOBAL TRENDS

- In 2013, 86% of world’s refugees were hosted by developing countries; this is 16% more than a decade ago.
- The UK is not among the top 20 refugee-hosting countries.

ASYLUM IN THE UK

- The UK is the only European country with no time limit on how long asylum seekers can be kept in detention.
- In the last few years the UK has received roughly 20,000 asylum applicants per year while around 14,000 asylum seekers have been detained each year. This means that the majority of asylum seekers are detained at some point during their asylum application.
- £76 million a year of tax-payers money is wasted detaining asylum seekers who are ultimately released.
- Since 2008, the number of migrants in detention has increased by 35%, yet number of enforced removals has declined by 24%.
- Nearly 30,000 migrants are detained each year, including children, pregnant women and those suffering from mental health problems.

VULNERABLE PEOPLE IN DETENTION

- 203 children were detained in 2013, 70 of whom were under 5 years old.
- There have been 12,431 people on suicide watch in asylum detention in the UK since January 2007.
- There have been 1,486 attempted suicides in asylum detention in the UK since January 2007.
- There have been 22 deaths in immigration detention centres across the UK since 1989. Since 2005, there have been at least five deaths shortly after release from immigration detention.
- Victims of rape are routinely detained in the UK. They do not receive counselling or psychological treatment while in detention.
- Women have been subjected to sexual harassment, sexual assault and rape by male guards while in immigration detention.
- LGBTI1 asylum-seekers in detention centers are often subjected to a high degree of isolation, threats of violence and homophobic harassment and abuse by both facility staff and other detainees.

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1 Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual and intersex.