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Children's Legal Centre

Supporting and protecting refugee and asylum seeking children

Kamena Dorling, Head of Policy & Public Affairs

24 May 2018

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better chances
for children
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Migrant Children's Project

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Briefing on the National Transfer Scheme for asylum-seeking children

Inquiry into Home Office consideration of children's 'best interests'

The RCC Retweeted

MigrantChildren CCLC
@MigrantChildren

In case you missed it - @BBCNewsnight coverage of asylum seekers being granted 'no study' conditions. We welcome revised Home Office guidance but remain concerned about wider impact of Immigration Bail provisions. See our advice page for more info: childrenslegalcentre.com/resources/no-s…

'No study' conditions a…
This information page pr…
childrenslegalcentre.com

14 May 2018

EMPIRE WINDRUSH
LONDON

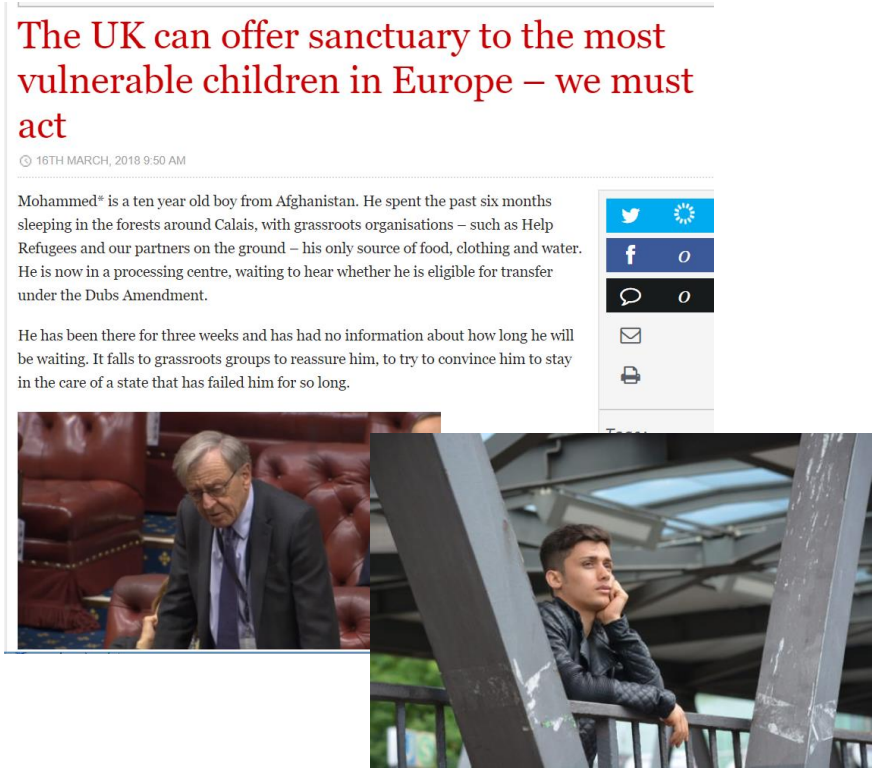
Unaccompanied children

2017: **2,206** claims (3,290 in 2016)

Top countries of origin:
Sudan, **Albania, Eritrea, Iraq, Vietnam**

Large decrease in young **Afghans** (754 in 2016 to 210 in 2017)

Unaccompanied children



The UK can offer sanctuary to the most vulnerable children in Europe – we must act

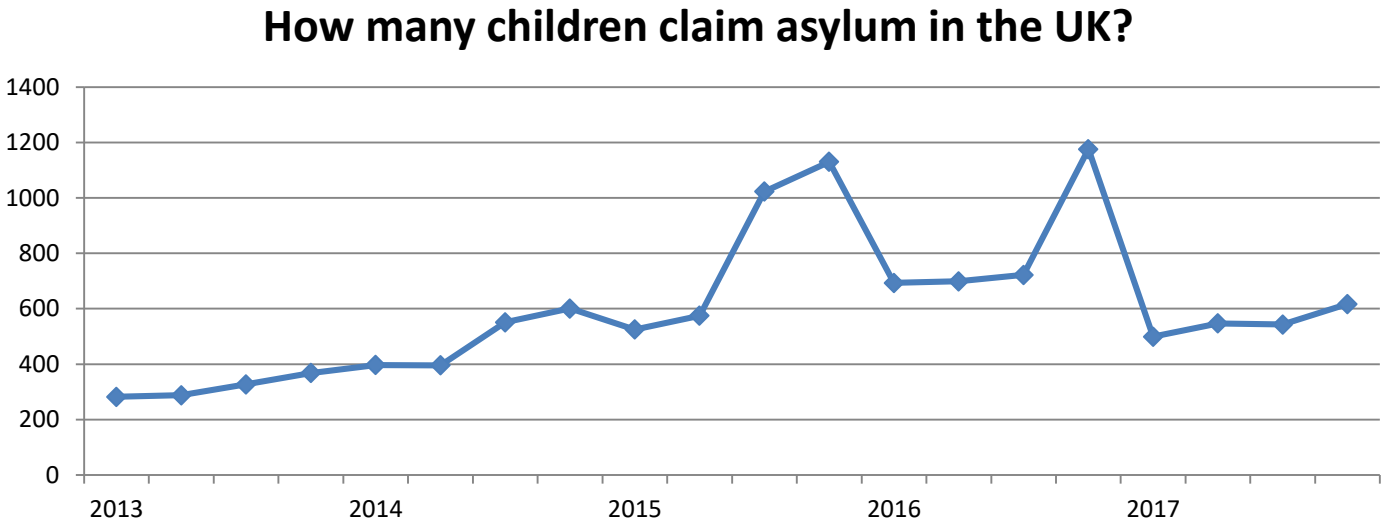
16TH MARCH, 2018 9:50 AM

Mohammed* is a ten year old boy from Afghanistan. He spent the past six months sleeping in the forests around Calais, with grassroots organisations – such as Help Refugees and our partners on the ground – his only source of food, clothing and water. He is now in a processing centre, waiting to hear whether he is eligible for transfer under the Dubs Amendment.

He has been there for three weeks and has had no information about how long he will be waiting. It falls to grassroots groups to reassure him, to try to convince him to stay in the care of a state that has failed him for so long.

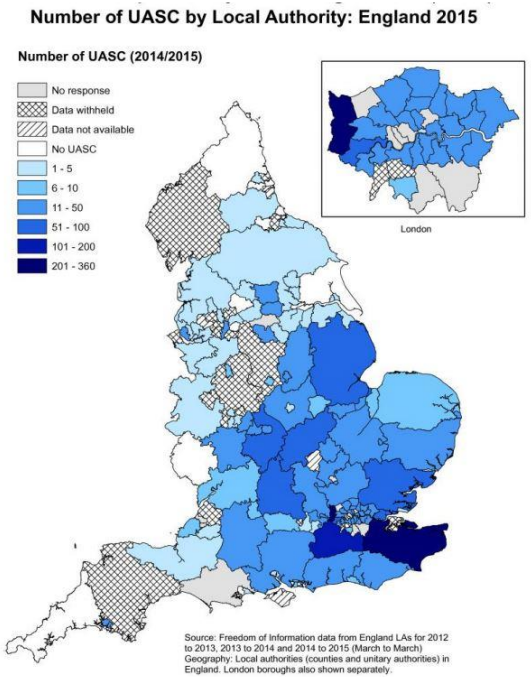
- children transferred under the Dubs Amendment (**480 children**)
- since 2015, **811 children** have been reunited with family in UK under Dublin III provisions
- estimated **2,300 children & 800 young people** with unresolved immigration issues in local authority care in England

Statistics

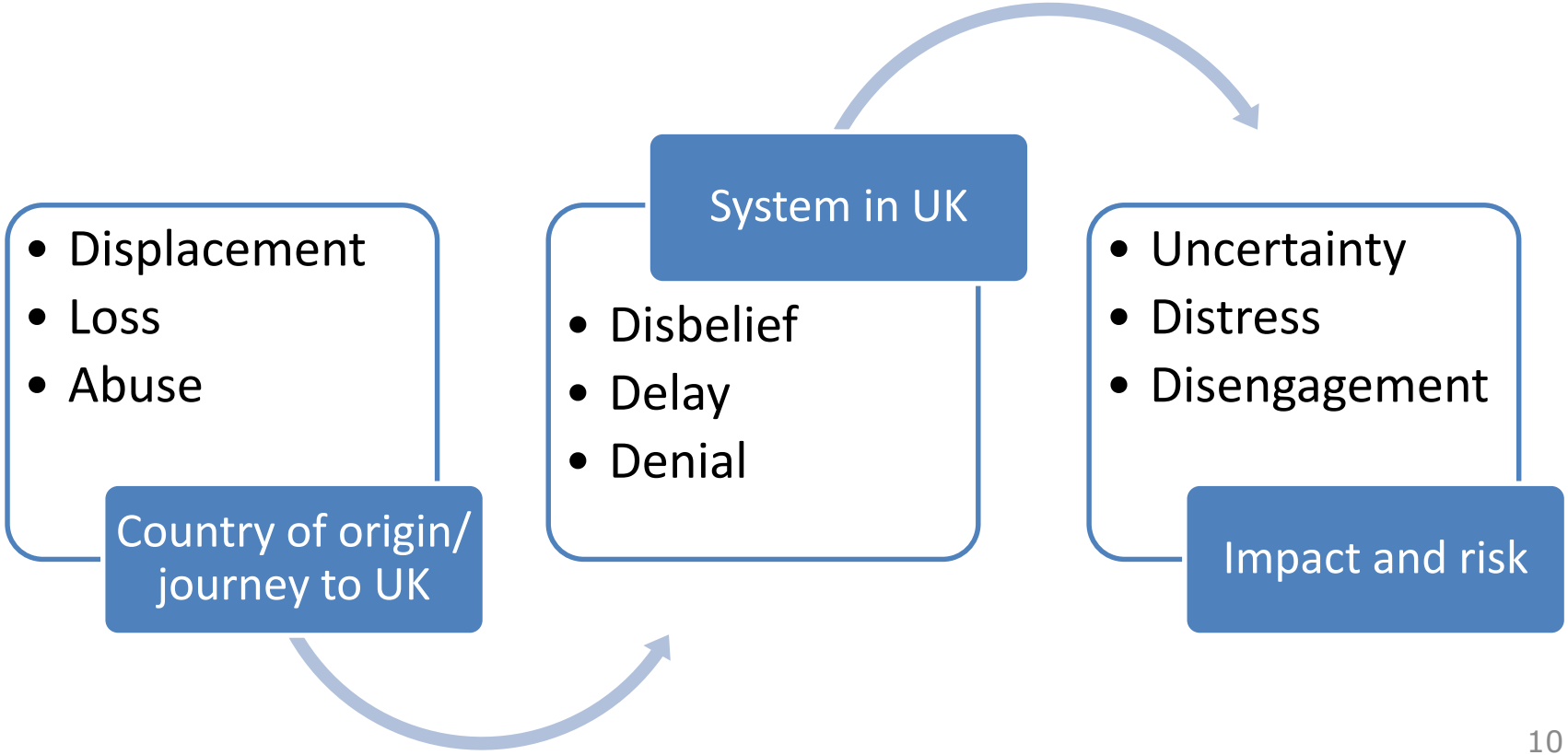


As of 2017 children account for just over 8% of all asylum applications

National Transfer Scheme



Common problems



- ¼ children claiming asylum have ages disputed by the Home Office
- Some children don't receive an asylum decision for 1 ½ - 2 years
- Last year, 56% granted **refugee status**, 27% granted **limited leave as an unaccompanied asylum-seeking child** (UASC leave) til 17 ½
- High levels of mental illness: post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), mood disorders and agoraphobia.

Case study

As a 10-year-old orphan, Stephen was picked up by traffickers in Vietnam, forced to take a torturous journey through Russia, across Europe and into the UK in a lorry via Calais, then forced to suffer five years of exploitation growing cannabis around the UK. He was found by police aged 16 and placed in foster care in the North of England. However, his asylum claim was refused and he was only granted permission to stay in the UK until he turned 17 ½. He started to recover and rebuild his life within a loving foster family, but on turning 18 he faced being returned to Vietnam where he had no family and with the risk of further exploitation.

Safeguarding Strategy

Press release

New safeguarding strategy boosts support for lone child migrants

New training for foster carers announced as part of a new strategy to improve the care of unaccompanied children

Published 1 November 2017
From: Department for Education, Home Office, Robert Goodwill MP, and The Rt Hon Brandon Lewis MP

- Training for 1,000 foster carers and support workers
- Updated guidance on caring for unaccompanied migrant children and child victims of modern slavery;
- Research into Dublin III children & guidance for families

Safeguarding Strategy

Joint ministerial foreword

Unaccompanied asylum seeking and refugee children can be some of the most vulnerable children in our society. They are alone and in an unfamiliar country, at the end of what could have been a long, perilous and traumatic journey. Some of these children may have experienced exploitation or persecution in their home country or on their journey to the UK. Some may have been trafficked, and many more are at risk of being trafficked, being exploited in other ways, or going missing once they arrive in the UK.

We must remember that they are children. It is true that their immigration status will have an impact on their future, but they should not be defined solely by their status as an asylum seeking or refugee child. They are children who are likely to have faced many difficulties in their lives and will need to be cared for while they are in the UK. They are children who will need access to education and a range of public services to offer them the support and accommodation they need to promote their safety, health and wellbeing.

Revised guidance

- Department for Education, *Care of unaccompanied migrant children and child victims of modern slavery*, November 2017
- DfE & Home Office, *National Transfer Scheme Protocol for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children*, March 2018
- Home Office, *Assessing Age*, February 2018
- Home Office, *Processing children's asylum claims*, October 2017

Forthcoming: Revised Family and Friends guidance; guidance for families of children arriving under Dublin III; online resources for social workers on immigration system.

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The Guardian

UK edition

For child asylum seekers turning 18 is a time of fear not celebration

Andy Elvin

When unaccompanied asylum-seeking children turn 18 their support can be completely cut off - no matter how long they have been in the UK

NHS will stop sharing immigrants' data with Home Office

Robert Wright, Public Policy Correspondent MAY 9, 2018

National Health Service providers will no longer routinely give information about potential illegal immigrants to the Home Office, in the second softening of the immigration system since Sajid Javid became Home Secretary last week.

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Asylum seekers 'given inappropriate study bans'

By James Clayton & Phil Kemp
BBC Newsnight

11 May 2018 Share

Better support and protection

- Understanding the immigration & asylum system
- Identifying trafficking
- Decision made in the *best interests* of children
- Keeping children and young people informed and engaged
- Triple planning

Children & Young People Now

For everyone working with children, young people and families

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Ofsted praises council for work with child refugees and care leavers

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