

www.asylumpolicy.info

Interim Evaluation


by Dr R Moran

July 2007

executive summary

www.exile.org.uk

Helping people subjected to Citizenship, Asylum, Immigration and Nationality controls,
laws, policies and practices



The text in this document may be reproduced free of charge in any format or medium providing that it is reproduced accurately and not used in a misleading context. The material must be acknowledged, including the following citation:

Moran, R.A (2007) www.asylumpolicy.info (www.exile.org.uk) - Interim evaluation summary, <http://www.exile.org.uk/evaluationsummary.pdf> (5 page .pdf)

Any enquiries relating to the this document should be addressed to:

Frank Corrigan Exile 27 Old Gloucester Street London WC1N 3XX
Fax: 0870 285 6021 or e-mail: frank@exile.org.uk

Foreword

Exile, as the management board of asylumpolicy.info, is glad to receive this independent evaluation report. We would like to thank everyone who took the time to complete the evaluation survey and discuss the service directly with independent evaluator Dr Rhetta Moran.

The report clearly highlights how the asylumpolicy.info service is making a real impact on issues

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Rhetta Moran', is positioned on the left side of the page.

Executive summary

1. Methodology and respondents

An online survey was conducted by an independent consultant. 617 people answered the survey either wholly (29%) or in part (71%). This represents more than 10% of the service users.

Profile of respondents

Of the 617 respondents:

- There were more or less equal numbers of men and women
- The majority (60%) were aged 26 – 45
- The majority (65%) defined themselves as white; 16% as Black or Black British, 9% as Asian or Asian British
- The majority (69%) were living in the UK; the 40 responses from people outside the UK (6%) came from 21 different countries
- 20% had sought or were seeking asylum

Work and volunteering

- Almost half (43%) did unpaid voluntary work. Of these, 52% were also paid workers. Others were in full time higher education, retired, or unemployed.
- Respondents in work were employed in the voluntary sector (40%), private sector (20%); local government (17%) and national government (3%)
- Volunteers were active with many different groups and issues, nearly all related to the asylum system and refugees

2. Evaluation findings

The evaluation demonstrates clearly that www.asylumpolicy.info has a significantly sized user base that feels positive about the service and the ways in which it provides information, strengthens networks, and feeds into campaigns and policy development. Many are using the service to help them develop strategy, carry out research or influence people they work or volunteer with. In addition to those making direct use of the service, it is clear that many people pass selected information on, either by email or through printing it out. The service therefore reaches a considerably wider audience than just direct users.

Impact on service users and their agencies

- Almost all respondents (96%) felt that the service had helped them to improve their knowledge about asylum and immigration policy in the UK, and 86% felt they had gained a better understanding about world conflict and why people migrate or seek asylum.
- Around 80% said the service had helped in the development of strategic policy, and had helped campaigns about asylum and migration
- Just over 50% felt the service had helped them to change the attitudes of the people they work with.
- Almost 50% felt the service had helped them change practice in the organisation they work or volunteer with, and just over 40% that it had helped them change policy
- Around half felt it had helped them change attitudes among people they work or volunteer with.
- 88% felt the service helped to improve networks.
- People finding the service useful in this way forward the information on to others (77%).
- In the month prior to accessing the survey, half the sample described themselves as having used the service to inform their actions.

- The most popular application of the service was for research activity (29%), followed by campaigning (24%), policy development (20%) and training (19%).

Use of different sections

- The overwhelming majority of respondents use the UK section - almost two thirds of them often or very often.
- Likewise, 90% used the world section, over a third regularly.
- 'Events' is the least used part of the site, though 80% used it occasionally.
- Across all sections, around 33% clicked on links.

Disseminating to others

- Almost 75% emailed information on to others
- Around 66% printed out information to give to others.
- The legal section and social care section were most frequently forwarded.
- Workers often forwarded relevant information to others in their professional field (eg legal, social care, education, health and housing), though smaller numbers also forwarded to people in other fields.

Issues relating to subscription

- The great majority of respondents found it easy to subscribe to the service.
- 58% would not continue to use the service if it had to charge
- 84% thought many people would stop using the service if it charged

3. Recommendations

The recommendations are set out in more detail in Section 3. of this report. In summary they are:

- Improve the face to face usability of the service
- Make advertising and marketing changes
- Create a discussion forum on the website
- Develop an editorial policy
- Continue evaluation

A full copy of this evaluation can be downloaded from:

<http://www.exile.org.uk/evaluation.pdf>
(36 page .pdf)