

# Al-Muntada

Of the Iraqi Association

www.iraqiassociation.org

**IRAQI ASSOCIATION**

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## Asylum Seekers: Some Myths and Truths...



Greece, 2015: Iraqi and Syrian refugees walk towards Greece's border with Macedonia, near the village of Idomeni. Photograph: Yannis Behrakis/Reuters

The myth: Asylum seekers jump the queue when it comes to admission to schools and harm the education of local children

The truth: The children of asylum seekers are subject to the same admission rules as any other UK residents.

The myth: Asylum seekers come to Britain and are immediately given free homes and full benefits

The truth: They are not allowed to claim welfare benefits. Asylum seekers benefits are paid by central government's National Asylum Support Service (NASS) and not from local council taxes, this is to cover their accommodation and support costs. A national report of asylum seekers and refugees, revealed 85% experience hunger, 95% cannot afford to buy clothes or shoes and 80% are not able to maintain their wellbeing.

The myth: Asylum seekers are a drain on the economy

The truth: After initial barriers such as the ability to speak English and the recognition of overseas qualifications are overcome, refugees can make a valuable contribution as professionals, tax payers and as active members of their local community.

The myth: Asylum seekers are linked to rising crime

The truth: In every community there are always a few members that ruin it for the rest and asylum seekers or refugees are no exception. However, a report published by the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) confirmed that there is no evidence for a higher rate of criminality among refugees and asylum seekers. Asylum seekers are less likely to commit major crimes than British citizens, as this would affect their asylum application. In fact they are more likely to become victims of crime in the UK.

### Our Services Dealt with 855 Cases

During the course of three months, from August to end of October this year, our charity dealt with 855 cases. Iraqi Association users come from different London Boroughs, for this period, the top three London Boroughs were, Hammersmith and Fulham of 153 individuals, this followed by Ealing of 115 individuals, then Brent of 67 individuals. The breakdown of our help with our charity users during August, September and October of this year covers the following categories.

Categories	Cases
Training and Employment	30
Housing	105
Immigration	345
Education	17
Hardship and Welfare	216
Health and Wellbeing	80
General	62
<b>Total</b>	<b>855</b>

From the above data, Iraqi Association users were 387 Males and 308 Females. Age Ranges were between 10 - 85 years. The Greater London area is not the only source of our clients, however, we equally serve people from outer London area, such as Hastings, Eastbourne, Cardiff, Birmingham, Manchester...etc. from the above data, we have assisted 37 outer London people during the course of the above period. For further detail of the data breakdown please contact the Manager at the Iraqi Association on 020 7023 2650.



France, 1939: Spanish refugees stream into Banyuls-sur-Mer in the French Pyrenees as the republicans face defeat in the civil war. Photograph: FPG/Hulton Archive/Getty Images

The myth: Asylum seekers are given priority over other council tenants for properties

The truth: Asylum seekers are NOT entitled to council housing. Accommodation and support for people seeking asylum is provided by a private organisation under contract with the Home Office.

**WE NEED YOU TO VOLUNTEER**

**020 7023 2650**

**info@iraqiassociation.org**

# We're Moving !our Office

We look forward to welcoming clients and contacts to our new White City Office, Unit 1 Cavell House, 233 Wood Lane, London W12 0HL from Monday 14 December 2015. The move will take place over the weekend (5-6 December), ensuring that client services are unaffected. As well as being slightly larger than our current office in Norland House, Shepherds Bush, our new offices boasts more client and volunteer meeting space. Nearest tube to our new location is White City (Central Line).

## Buses:

**7, 70, 72, 220, 272 & 283**



## Snapshot of our Activities

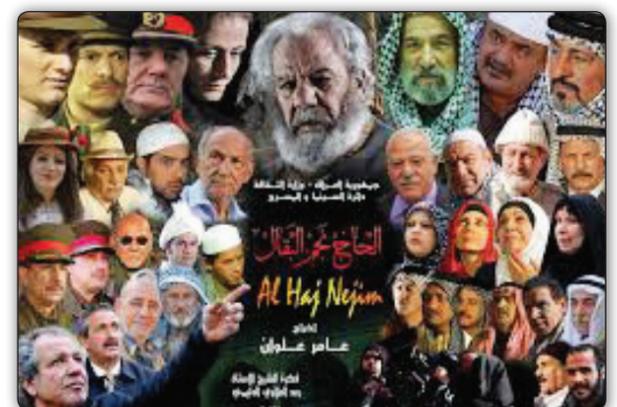
Iraqi Association is a non sectarian organisation, the charity provides its services to everyone who comes through its doors, regardless of his/her backgrounds. In addition to our daily client services, the following activities were organised in July, August, September to the end of October 2015. Thanks to our volunteers and supporters.



Date	Activity
16.07.2015	Screening of Iraqi film – Cultural Cafes of Baghdad movie, written and directed by Eman Khudair.
28.07.2015	Organising a Seminar in Shepherds Bush, West London on Social basis of violent extremism, by Dr Ibrahim AL-Haidari (Professor in Sociology and Author). The event was Chaired by Dr Al-Yassiri, consultant psychiatrist and chair of Iraqi Association
09.08.2015	Annual family seaside trip to Hastings attended by 200 people from all walks of life.
28.08.2015	Seminar on Extremism in Islam, delivered by author and Islamic heritage researcher; Dr. Rashid Al Kayoun.
18.09.2015	Commemoration of late Dr. Sabah Mari, a former Trustee of Iraqi Association who passed away on 16.07.2015. Dr Mari's efforts and commitment led to the development of Al Muntada, a community led newspaper with 15000 readerships.
31.10.2015	Organised jointly by Iraqi Psychiatrists Association and Iraqi Association, this event was attended by 50 doctors, academics and professionals.

## Haj Najim the Grocer Movie

On 16th October, the Iraqi Association screened this film, directed by Amer Alwan. Music Ahmed Acanthosis and starring Sami Kaftan, also participated in the film a number of Iraqi and British actors. The film took part in several Arab and international film festivals and won the award for best Arab film in Rabat Film Festival in Morocco. It is about the Najaf revolution in 1918 during the British occupation of Iraq, addressing the life story of one of the symbols of the revolution, Haj Najim the grocer. The Movie attended by 80 people.



## IRAQI ASSOCIATION (IA)

The Iraqi Association is a non-profit organisation that exists to enable Iraqis to settle and integrate in this country with rights to express their cultural identities. Our work aimed at Iraqis, by providing volunteerism, advice, public health support, counselling, training, employment

guidance, information services, and organising cultural events. It is also our mission to raise awareness about relevant events in Iraq and the integration process in this country.”

### Our Aims and Methods:

We provide the following services to our clients regardless of their race,

ethnic origin, language, and gender, religious or political background.

- Face-to-face support session
- Group empowerment session
- Workshop advice session
- Training session
- Outreach work
- Client-led information

