Migrants Resource Centre and Asylum Aid official merger.

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Migrants Resource Centre and Asylum Aid have both formally agreed to merge. This will help to create a robust, larger, organization more able to meet the growing needs of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers in London. The legal process is now being undertaken with the expectation that the merger will go through midsummer. Until a new branding exercise is undertaken, the merged organization will continue to be known as MRC (Migrants Resource Centre) and will continue to operate from MRC's current service locations in Westminster and Asylum Aid's offices in Highbury Islington.

Both charities provide support for migrants and refugees across the UK. Between them, the organisations provide a wide variety of services including immigration and asylum legal advice; health, housing, debt and employment advice; English language training; and, computer skills training. Both organisations also campaign to protect the rights of migrants and refugees and to make the UK immigration system fairer and more efficient.

The current European crisis in protection has created an unprecedented need for specialist support services for migrants and refugees in the UK, even as existing services have and are being severely cut.

Migrants Resource Centre and Asylum Aid share the same ethos and values. Both organisations have long histories of providing high quality services to their communities and are keen to harness each other's strengths. Building on their individual successes, the organisations believe that together they will be able to do much more to meet the growing needs of migrants and refugees. Through joining forces, they will be able to provide a wider range of services for a larger number of beneficiaries. And together, they will be a much stronger voice in support of human rights.

Helen Rice, Chair of the Migrants Resource Centre Board of Trustees says: "The merger would provide us with the opportunity to support even more migrants and refugees with an even wider range of services, while helping to strengthen the organisation for the future. We are committed to keeping the people we support at the centre of everything we do and are confident that this partnership would mean we can deliver an even better service for them".

Catherine Briddick, Chair of the Asylum Aid Board of Trustees says: "This proposed merger of two strong and like-minded organisations dedicated to serving the interests of migrants and refugees is an exciting step forward. We will bring together the wealth of experience and knowledge of both organisations in order to offer the very best support for migrants and refugees."

The merger is subject to completion of due diligence and final approval of the two organisations' Trustees and members. The final structure of the organisation, including issues of branding, office locations, and staffing, will be agreed by the Trustees of the two organisations in due course. It is not expected that there will be any staff cuts as a result of the merger. Instead, the partnership is expected to generate opportunities for growth.

About Migrants Resource Centre

Established in 1984, the Migrants Resource Centre offers a range of free services to support migrants, refugees and asylum seekers to fully participate in society in the UK. By supporting them to develop their skills and understand their rights and responsibilities, we enable them to fully participate in and contribute to that society. We provide a safe place in which users are able to learn, to meet with others, to speak out for a better world and to move on feeling stronger. We also play a strong part in initiating and participating in campaigns, networks and partnerships to improve the lives of migrants, asylum seekers and refugees.

About Asylum Aid

Founded in 1990, Asylum Aid is a leading asylum rights advocate with a demonstrable track record of securing protection from persecution for individual refugees and of achieving significant structural improvements to the UK asylum process. Asylum Aid enables the most vulnerable asylum seekers – women, victims of sexual violence, victims of trafficking, unaccompanied children, people persecuted for

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their sexual orientation or identity, victims of torture, and stateless people – to receive the protection they need by receiving high quality, specialist legal advice and representation.

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