

People, power and priorities

Insights into the
UK refugee and
migration sector

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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1. Introduction

This summary presents selected findings of a major review of the UK refugee and migration sector and funding landscape in 2023, commissioned by Migration Exchange.¹

It provides an overview of the challenging social and political context in the UK for work on refugee and migration issues since 2020. It offers a 'helicopter view' of key developments in NGO infrastructure and activities,² alongside recent trends in funding and grant-making.³

The research highlights **six priority areas** – along with **suggested actions** – for NGOs and funders to consider:

- Adapting to external challenges and crises
- Funding and financial sustainability
- Racial justice, power and lived experience
- Staff welfare and leadership
- Advocacy and influencing
- Alliances and collaboration

Informed by data and views from across the sector, we hope this will be a helpful resource for organisations and funders looking to work strategically and collaboratively towards lasting change. Readers are encouraged to refer to the full report for more detailed information and analysis.

2. The context

In 2023, the UK is increasingly diverse. Around 9.5 million people (14% of the total population) living here were born overseas.⁴ Net migration to the UK in 2022 was a record 606,000.⁵ This largely reflected a growth in immigration from outside the European Union for study and for work, as well as via bespoke visa routes from Ukraine and Hong Kong.

Since 2020, UK refugee and migration issues have been influenced by a turbulent social and political context. Key developments have included the global Covid-19 pandemic; a chaotic and polarised national political environment; increased media and political attention on small boats crossing

the channel; public debate dominated by culture wars; populism and the rise of the far-right; and the growing impacts of the cost-of-living crisis.

// As a small sector it's been totally exhausting. You're trying to respond to one crisis and something else happens."⁶

Many of these events disproportionately affect people experiencing structural disadvantage related to race, gender, economic status and disability. Race and racial injustice have continued to form the backdrop for public debates about immigration, influenced by the global Black Lives Matter movement and the legacy of British colonialism.

The UK policy environment relating to refugee and migration issues has been challenging. Government migration policies have generally been hostile, poorly planned and chaotically implemented. Key developments since 2020 include:

- **Government efforts to reform the UK's current refugee protection system.** Reducing the numbers of people claiming asylum in the UK is now central to the Conservative party's re-election strategy, with a particular focus on reducing the numbers of people crossing the English Channel in small boats. Two controversial pieces of immigration legislation – the Nationality and Borders Act 2022 and Illegal Migration Bill 2023 – will transform the legal framework for those seeking protection from persecution or trafficking and have been widely condemned for undermining human rights principles and democratic oversight.
- **The 'full-dispersal' asylum policy** which has seen large numbers of people making asylum claims sent across the UK at very short notice, to areas lacking support services. 50,000 people are currently being accommodated in hotels and hostels for extended periods of time, at a cost of £6 million per day.
- **New bespoke visa and resettlement programmes for Ukrainians and Hong Kong British Nationals Overseas.** Hundreds of thousands of Ukrainian nationals and people from Hong Kong have arrived in the UK since 2020. These programmes build on the model of recent resettlement schemes for people from Syria and Afghanistan.

// These sorts of schemes create new pressures that are really hard to deal with"⁷

- **The intensification of a ‘hostile environment’ for many people who are migrants in the UK**, and particularly for those with no resource to public funds (NRPF), and who are undocumented. This has been exacerbated by the historically high Home Office backlog in decision-making, increasing application fee costs, and the decline in legal advice provision.
 - **Failure to address the injustice experienced by the Windrush generation**, many of whom still have not received the compensation they were promised, and inaction on key recommendations from the Windrush inquiry.
 - **The UK’s exit from the European Union in 2020**. This has led to 5.5 million EU citizens needing to apply for settlement in the UK,⁸ and ongoing uncertainty about the future for 2.5 million people granted a temporary ‘pre-settled’ status.
 - **Aggressive criticism of refugee and migration campaigners** by some MPs, hostile media and the far right, aimed at deterring charities from speaking out against government policies. There have been a small number of physical attacks on lawyers and charity staff in recent years.
- // There is a concern around safeguarding and preparing ourselves for physical attacks because it is only a matter of time before online aggression becomes physical aggression. This is the environment in which we operate – it’s hostile and dangerous and we’re not equipped to deal with it.”⁹**
- Despite the highly charged policy environment, **public opinion on immigration has steadily warmed** since 2015.¹⁰ However, there is growing concern about the political management of small boat crossings.

3. The sector in 2023¹¹

Size and geography

The refugee and migration sector comprises a diverse ecosystem of organisations, projects and networks working across the UK. It includes registered charities, other formally constituted not-for-profit organisations, a wide range of voluntary and community-based organisations, and international organisations.

Our analysis shows that **1,463** registered charities currently deliver at least some work on UK refugee and migration issues.¹² **708** charities (what we call the 'core charitable sector') focus on refugee and migration issues.¹³

Analysis of the number and location of charities in the sector shows that:

- **There has been an increase in the number of UK refugee and migration charities since 2020.**
 - 137 new charities were established in the core charitable sector between 2020 and 2022 – an increase of 24%.
- **The vast majority (93%) of core sector charities are based in England and Wales.**
 - Just 5% are based in Scotland, and 1% in Northern Ireland.
 - Around half of the sector's larger charities (with annual incomes over £500,000) are based in London.

Funding and finances

Funding to the sector increased significantly between 2020 and 2022. In September 2022, the collective income for the core charitable sector was **£176m** – an increase of **£59m (51%)** since 2020. This increase in funding was largely due to the allocation of new funds in response to the Covid-19 pandemic,¹⁴ and consequently is likely to be temporary.

// In terms of Covid emergency funds... when the funding came to an end, it was like what happens next?! Because there wasn't any other funding for us to apply to."¹⁵

Analysis of funding to the sector shows that:

- **Resources are heavily concentrated in a small number of large organisations.**
 - 44% of the funding is controlled by just three percent of the charities in the core sector.¹⁶
 - The sector's five biggest charities have a collective income of £61m. This equates to over a third (35%) of the core charitable sector's total funding.

- Income growth in the sector between 2020 and 2022 particularly benefited more established, medium and large-sized charities.
- During this period, the number of refugee and migration charities with incomes between £500,000 and £1 million per annum more than doubled – a disproportionate increase in comparison to the rest of the sector.

- **Underlying financial vulnerabilities remain a challenge for many NGOs.**

- A majority of NGOs surveyed for this research said that financial sustainability is a key future priority issue for the sector.
- The number of NGOs which had adequate reserves to sustain their organisation's activities for four months or less has gone down from 66% in 2020 to 59% in 2023.
- Seven out of ten NGOs said that it had been particularly difficult to secure unrestricted funding in the last two years.

// A lot of new funding went in around Covid... but I've seen organisations growing and not being so sustainable.”¹⁷

// Funders are still reluctant to give core grants for our core work, so we have to keep coming up with new projects to fund it.”¹⁸

- **NGOs remain largely dependent on trusts and foundations for funding.**

- In 2022, 62% of NGOs surveyed rely on grants from trusts and foundations for at least 60% of their income. Analysis of data from key funders suggests that whilst there has been an increase in the number of grants made, the average size of individual grants has slightly decreased.
- NGOs report a small rise in income from central government since 2020.¹⁹ However, this has largely been restricted funding linked to specific outcomes, and has been set against a backdrop of declining statutory funding for refugee and migration work.
- NGOs raised slightly less income from individual giving in 2022 than in 2020, reflecting pressures caused by the rising cost of living.²⁰

Key activities

Most organisations in the sector work on asylum and refugee issues, either exclusively or as part of a broader focus on all migration issues.²¹

Analysis of the sector's key activities shows that:

- **The direct services provided by NGOs have shifted since 2020.**

- Nearly all NGOs (87%) provide direct services to individuals and communities, including advice, support and convening social events.
- In 2022, more NGOs gave welfare advice and emergency support than in 2020 (up 9%), and fewer provided integration support (down 8%).

// We've had to respond to the families in hotels a lot. They are so isolated and don't have appropriate support."²²

- **Advocacy and influencing work remains poorly resourced and many NGOs have reduced this work in the past three years.**

- **Most NGOs (79%) deliver some influencing work on refugee and migration issues**, including media and communications work (61%), community-organising (48%), and parliamentary lobbying (43%). Around half of NGOs who do this work focus on UK-level campaigning, with the remainder focusing on the local/regional/country level.
- **Three quarters of NGOs dedicate a fifth or less of their income to influencing work.** Around half have fewer than one staff member delivering this work.²³
- **The number of NGOs doing influencing work decreased between 2020 and 2022.** There was a decrease in the number of NGOs (and particularly small NGOs) engaging with civil servants (down 24%), running campaigns (down 16%) and lobbying parliamentarians (down 13%) since 2020. Community organising was the only type of influencing activity which did not reduce during this period.²⁴

// We're just trying as a team to focus on making a difference at a local level, trying to share positive stories, encouraging people to be part of the local community."²⁵

- **Only a small number of NGOs (7%) currently focus on providing support to other organisations in the sector.**

Staff and volunteers

- **Most NGOs employ small staff teams and rely on high numbers of volunteers.**
 - Around half of NGOs had between one and five full-time staff members. A quarter operate with just one or two full time employees.
 - Just under two thirds of NGOs have more than ten active, regular volunteers and around a third have more than 40 volunteers.
- **A majority of NGOs (80%) involve people with lived experience of the asylum or immigration system in the design or delivery of their work.** Most also report that people with lived experience lead or significantly contribute to their influencing work (79%).²⁶

4. Digging deeper: six key priorities

The evidence gathered through this research has significant implications for both NGOs and funders. The findings point to six key priority areas for the future:

Priority 1. Adapting to external challenges and crises

The UK migration and refugee sector has faced a turbulent and highly challenging external environment since 2020, including the Covid-19 pandemic, the introduction of hostile and chaotic policies, and growing dysfunction across the immigration system. Being prepared and equipped to deal with continued turmoil will be a key priority for the future.

Despite some positive experiences of responses to the pandemic and large-scale arrivals triggered by the war in Ukraine, the sector currently has a limited collective capacity to plan for – and respond to – crisis events. This is exacerbated by the pace and intensity of change, the scant resource for preparation and coordination, and the dysfunctional nature of much central government policy and practice. Just a third of NGOs think that the sector is in better shape now to respond to ‘shock events’ than it was in 2020.

// The sector’s response to the Covid pandemic was a real success – the agility and the way we quickly adapted to the new environment we faced.”²⁷



Looking ahead: NGOs and funders are concerned that the sector will continue to face intense, and rapidly unfolding, pressures, to which it will need to adapt. This could include rising demand for emergency and support services; an increase in destitution, detention and removals arising from the Nationality and Borders Act and Illegal Migration Bill; and responses to longer-term challenges such as climate change.

Based on the research findings, the priorities to focus on include:

- ***Coordination and crisis response support for service delivery organisations.*** The sector could benefit from more structured guidance and support when external crises or challenging policies affect frontline work. This could usefully help NGOs (including smaller, local NGOs) to adapt their services to meet changing needs.
- ***Systematic rapid response funding.*** Funders should consider how support could best be swiftly provided in future, to help NGOs to respond to changes to the system and hostile policies. This should be developed with an eye to legacy, and building longer-term infrastructure and capacity.
- ***A pan-sector strategy on immigration legal advice.*** A shared legal advice strategy could help to guide the sector at a time of intense pressure, and assist NGOs to anticipate and respond to future challenges.

// This [lack of legal advice provision] is not a crisis, it is the new norm... We need a robust analysis of the scale of the problem and we will have to think differently and innovatively about the solutions.”²⁸

- ***Longer-term strategic horizon-scanning.*** Some NGOs may need to re-envisage their work within what threatens to be a radically different migration and asylum system in the future. Strategic support could help NGOs to consider the future of their work in a changing context, including the impacts of a polarised political landscape, new technologies and climate change.

// At most, the sector is prepared for the next one or two years but not further ahead.”²⁹

Priority 2. Financial sustainability and funding

Much of the sector reports a growing concern about financial sustainability. This is compounded by the continued dependence of most NGOs on a limited pool of grant funding.

NGOs report that they are currently contending with an increasingly competitive funding landscape. The uneven distribution of resource means that smaller, grassroots organisations particularly struggle to secure adequate funding for their work. The cost-of-living crisis is leading to a growing demand for NGO services, whilst also increasing operational and delivery costs.

A core group of trusts and foundations continue to play an important role in providing funding and strategic inputs to the sector. There is a broadly positive assessment of the emergency support provided by funders during the pandemic. However, problems were created by the simultaneous closure of several key refugee and migration grant programmes, whilst funders conducted strategic reviews.

// Grant-making is getting noticeably better – funders are clearly listening and changing.”³⁰

Some modest improvements in grant-making to the sector since 2020 – including more flexible grants, cost-of-living increases and multi-year awards – now provide the basis for strengthening funder practice. Concerns remain about shifting funder priorities, lack of transparency about objectives, and inadequate accountability to NGOs about how money has been invested.

// Whatever the amount of money going into the sector, we need to understand the intention behind those investments and the results we are getting [as a sector]. That’s more important than the amounts of money.”³¹

Looking ahead: The financial environment for refugee and migration NGOs will continue to be challenging in the face of shifting need. Statutory funding and public donations remain unpredictable and appear to be declining, leaving the field increasingly reliant on trusts and foundations.

Priorities to focus on include:

- **More flexible, long-term grants.** NGOs continue to call for more accessible, unrestricted grant-making, and longer grant terms of at least five years. Although key funders are broadly supportive of this, more can be done to promote good practice across the funder landscape.
- **Increasing responsive and participatory grant-making.** Funders could introduce more flexible and emergency funding; strengthen innovative grant-making; and increase participatory grant delivery in partnership with NGOs. Funding could be more evenly distributed across organisations, to better support smaller, grassroots organisations.
- **Developing collective, forward-looking strategies.** Some NGOs called for funders to work more closely with them to shape the broader, strategic objectives behind grant-making, and to align this with a shared vision for the future.

Priority 3. Racial justice, power and lived experience

There are a range of views within the sector about how to tackle structural racism, challenge discrimination in the immigration system and build power among impacted, and particularly racialised, communities.

// The sector is still mostly led by people who have made a career in it and have learned experience, rather than people who have lived experience.”³²

Much of the sector’s focus thus far has been on how far organisations have been able to strengthen the meaningful involvement of people with lived experience of the asylum and migration systems in their work. 60% of NGOs and funders think that the sector now works more ‘with’ and less ‘on behalf’ of people who are migrants and refugees than it did in 2020. There is some evidence of progress, particularly in the involvement of people with lived experience in trustee boards, senior management, staff and volunteer teams, and on Advisory Boards.

Many NGOs and funders think, however, that there has been “*more talk than action*” on this issue. There has been widespread confusion in defining ‘lived’

and 'learned' experience. Lived experience involvement does not necessarily equate to power, and can be tokenistic or extractive. Building meaningful involvement requires time, commitment, and resources.

// Organisations have more representation and opportunities [for people with lived experience]... but it hasn't transformed how power is held in the organisations. It's a change in aesthetics rather than in power relations."³³

In addition, some argue that the sector's focus on lived experience remains too narrow, and side-steps deeper issues around racism, classism and other oppressive power dynamics. There is growing interest in new ways of working such as more open, collective decision-making processes and non-hierarchical management models, which can challenge structural exclusion more widely.

Looking ahead: Going forward, 65% of NGOs and 74% of funders think that increasing the meaningful involvement of people with lived experience should be one of the sectors' top five priorities. There was more consensus on this than on any other priority issue in the survey. This could be helpfully drawn together with debates about racism, power, and privilege across the sector, towards a clearer shared understanding of the issues and joint strategies.

Priorities to focus on include:

- ***A strategic, resourced approach towards lived experience involvement.*** This could help the sector to develop a more coherent, confident approach, share best practice and ensure that this work is adequately resourced and not extractive or tokenistic.
- ***Continuing to tackle discrimination and shift power across the sector.*** NGOs and funders could strengthen connections with the wider anti-racist movement, and learn from the approaches taken by community-organising and power-building work. They could engage more deeply with other social justice debates and movements, to address wider intersectional barriers including economic status, gender, religion and disability.

// The intersectionality of all this – lived experience is so varied, so complex. Class is connected, race is connected, we need to be aware of all these layers."³⁴

Priority 4. Staff welfare and leadership

There has been growing concern about staff welfare across the sector, as many employees have been working under considerable pressure for a sustained period of time. 43% of NGOs and funders now view this as a priority, and it was the issue that has grown most in salience since 2020 (26%).

NGO staff members in the sector have faced long-standing issues around overly broad job roles, lack of job security, and low pay rates. We heard that Covid-19 led to high levels of staff turnover, sickness and recruitment challenges. It has since led to permanent hybrid and remote working arrangements for many staff, with a range of welfare implications.

In addition, the fast-changing, hostile policy environment on refugee and migration issues has caused stress, exhaustion and burnout. There are particular concerns about frontline staff and those with lived experience. The rise of the far right, online harassment and the impact of toxic social media are increasingly problematic.

// There is a real risk of burnout for staff who cannot keep up with the level of demand they are having to manage.”³⁵

// If we don't address these issues, all the good work that migration funders are supporting will go to waste. The toll of people being targeted and trolled in culture wars is huge.”³⁶

Many NGOs are taking steps to address staff welfare concerns, including pastoral care, peer support and structured mental health support and supervision. Some funders are making new resources available to support wellbeing and mental health, although some NGOs would like to see more of a focus on improving working conditions in the sector. Strong management is viewed as crucial in order to support and protect staff.

// Our biggest challenge is the lack of developmental and management resources that you need to be able to support people well.”³⁷

Looking ahead: More work now needs to be done to support the sector's staff and leaders to build a safe and sustainable sector, amid widespread, ongoing pressures.

Priorities to focus on include:

- ***Capture and develop learning and resources about staff welfare.*** This could include sharing NGO best practice and more investment in sector resources and infrastructure which focus on staff welfare.
- ***Grant-making that supports staff welfare.*** This includes both 'funder-plus' support, and grant-making that enables secure and safe working conditions for staff across the sector.
- ***Guidance and support to people in management roles.*** Some managers across the sector would benefit from professional development support, through coaching, training and/or mentoring. This could strengthen confidence and help to create sustainable working environments.

Priority 5. Advocacy and influencing

Since 2020, the sector has had to contend with a hostile and chaotic environment for advocacy work. This has led to some NGOs (and particularly smaller organisations) reducing their involvement in campaigning activities, to focus on other priorities.

However, organisations which have traditionally devoted significant resources to influencing work have continued – and in some cases increased – this work. There is now a stronger core group of organisations working together on advocacy, including several joint campaign initiatives. A range of infrastructure organisations and grassroots networks also play a crucial role in coordinating and facilitating the sector's influencing work.

NGOs have faced widespread challenges in parliamentary lobbying over the past three years, and much of the sector's advocacy work has been reactive, in response to hostile legislation and policies. A small number of NGOs have focused on 'behind the scenes' work with civil servants to bring about specific changes.

// Most of the work over the last three years has been reactive, with no space for proactive work, strategic thinking on policy or strategies for the next election, because everyone is firefighting.”³⁸

Despite the challenges, NGOs across the sector have contributed to a range of effective advocacy initiatives and campaigns, influencing national, regional and local policies and supporting successful challenges in the courts.³⁹ Advocacy work informed and led by people with lived experience has been particularly impactful in recent years. There is a growing emphasis on community-organising and grassroots mobilisation approaches across the sector.

Looking ahead: Over the coming period, national advocacy work will largely focus on the Illegal Migration Bill and challenging the implementation of further hostile policies. The sector's focus will be increasingly on the upcoming General Election and preparing for a new government. However, much of the sector has not yet had adequate time or capacity to develop the strategies and relationships needed to influence the next government.

Priorities to focus on include:

- **Additional resource and strategic planning for the General Election and a new government:** There is appetite among some NGOs to do more focused planning ahead of the election, including power-mapping, political relationship-building and expert inputs on strategy.
- **Support to collaborative campaigns.** Most NGOs in the sector have low advocacy capacity, and there is a collective interest in equitable, collaborative campaign activities.
- **Longer-term investment in influencing capacity.** To achieve lasting, transformational change towards a more compassionate, rights-based system, the sector will need long-term investment in advocacy work, including parliamentary lobbying, media and communications, community-organising and activism.

// Everyone doesn't have to be in the same lane but there needs to be an attempt to achieve greater alignment so that collectively you are pulling together rather than pulling apart."⁴⁰

Priority 6. Alliances and Collaboration

Building strategic, equitable alliances is crucial for progress. 66% of NGOs we surveyed collaborate more with other organisations than they did three years ago. Around 40% of NGOs view alliances and collaborations – both with others in the sector and outside the sector – as a key priority over the coming period.

NGOs broadly benefited from increased collaboration during the pandemic, both within and beyond the sector, but report that alliance-building is now more difficult due to multiple pressures. There has been a proliferation of support networks and learning initiatives. Key funders are more aligned and collaborative than in the past, including through the establishment of several pooled funds.

Although the sector has grown, many of the NGOs that we spoke with had not had any significant contact with new refugee and migration charities, for example those established to support Hong Kong nationals. If the more established field can engage with these newer groups, there could be a significant boost in capacity, energy and influence on refugee and migration issues.

Building alliances outside the sector is also viewed as a key priority, particularly with racialised and diaspora communities. There are also important potential connections with other sectors (health, gender, climate, homelessness) which share cross-cutting concerns. However, the sector has not yet had the resources to develop a strategic approach towards this.

// There is nowhere near enough bridging between sectors. That is about capacity and we are not as used to doing it as we should be.”⁴¹

Looking ahead: There is an appetite to build more strategic connections across and beyond those organisations currently working on refugee and migration issues.

Priorities to focus on include:

- **Supporting effective, equitable collaborations.** The sector benefits from fair, respectful alliances. There is considerable learning about what this looks like, and this could be captured and shared.

- **A thoughtful convening role for funders.** Funders can play an important role in convening and/or resourcing joint initiatives. However, they need to be mindful of power dynamics and take steps to reduce negative impacts on NGOs.
- **Building new alliances.** NGOs and funders could come together to think strategically about the longer-term alliances that will be needed into the future, where the responsibility for building them lies, and what resources will be needed to make them happen.

Endnotes

- 1 The research was carried out between September 2022 and April 2023. It involved detailed analysis of registered charities in the UK working on refugee and migration issues, and of funding to the sector, using data from the Charity Commission for England and Wales, Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator, and Charity Commission for Northern Ireland, as well as data held by 360Giving; a survey of 175 NGOs with a combined annual income of around £103 million for UK refugee and migration work; a survey of 20 key trusts and foundations, with a combined annual spend of around £38 million for UK refugee and migration work; interviews with 32 NGOs and eight funders; six discussion workshops involving NGOs and funders. Priority was given to including the perspectives of community-based organisations and people with lived experience of the immigration system. Details of the methodology can be found in the full report.
- 2 We recognise the wide range of work which takes place outside the registered charity sector - where we refer to 'NGOs' we include both registered charities and non-charities.
- 3 Where relevant, we compare the data for this research against the findings presented in 'Taking Stock and Facing the Future', a review of the refugee and migration sector released by Migration Exchange in April 2020. <https://global-dialogue.org/taking-stock-and-facing-the-future/>
- 4 Dr Carlos Vargas-Silva and Dr Cinzia Rienzo, Migrants in the UK: An Overview, Migration Observatory, 2 August 2022. <https://migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/resources/briefings/migrants-in-the-uk-an-overview/>
- 5 'Net migration' refers to the difference between long-term immigration and long-term emigration levels. Office of National Statistics, Long-term international migration, provisional: year ending December 2022, 25 May 2022.
- 6 NGO participant, MEX workshop 1.
- 7 NGO interview 10.
- 8 See Migration Observatory Settling the Score? EU citizens' rights after a landmark judgement, 3 March 2023. <https://migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/resources/commentaries/settling-the-score-eu-citizens-rights-after-a-landmark-judgement/>

- 9 NGO interview 21.
- 10 See the IPSOS Mori longitudinal study into immigration attitudes in the UK, edited by Heather Rolfe, Sunder Katwala and Steve Ballinger, Immigration: a changing debate, British Future, September 2021. <https://www.britishfuture.org/publication/immigration-a-changing-debate/>
- 11 Key findings in this section are drawn from Sections 3, 4, and 5 of the full report where the full data and analysis can be found.
- 12 Data which refers to registered charities is based on data drawn from the three charity commissions. This largely relates to submitted annual accounts for charities' most recent complete financial year - in most cases the 2020-21 financial year.
- 13 The 'core sector' only includes registered charities that specifically focus on UK refugee and migration issues, and which have a minimum level of resource (at least £2 per annum) to do so.
- 14 We base this assessment on analysis of data from the 360 Giving website detailed in the full report. See also Barbra Mazur and Fancy Sinantha, *A Perspective: Rapid review of emergency funding to the UK migration and refugee sector during Covid-19 (March – November 2020)*, Migration Exchange, January 2021. <https://global-dialogue.org/a-perspective/>. This aligns with our analysis of 360 Giving data, outlined in the full report, which indicates that the UK refugee and migration sector saw an 85% increase (£24 million) in funding from trusts and foundations between 2018 and 2021.
- 15 NGO participant - MEX workshop 2.
- 16 21 UK charities have a collective income of £78 million (44% of the core charitable sector's total resources).
- 17 NGO participant, MEX workshop 2.
- 18 NGO interview 21.
- 19 This finding is drawn from the NGO survey which found a 3% rise in organisations receiving more than 40% of their income from central government between 2020 and 2022.
- 20 59% of NGOs surveyed for the research received 10% or less of their income from membership fees, donations, legacies or sales to the public (2020: 58%).
- 21 41% of NGOs surveyed for the research which work exclusively on asylum and/or refugee issues. 43% work on asylum and refugee issues as part of a wider focus on all migration issues. Just 16% of NGOs work exclusively on non-asylum/refugee immigration issues This has risen slightly since 2020, when just 7% of NGO respondents worked exclusively on non-asylum immigration issues.
- 22 NGO interview 2.
- 23 73% NGOs surveyed dedicated 20% or less of their income to influencing work, and 57% allocated 10% or less.
- 24 The percentage of NGOs delivering community organising work was 48% in both 2020 and 2022.
- 25 NGO participant, MEX workshop 3.
- 26 Both figures fell marginally since 2020 – from 83% and 81% respectively.
- 27 NGO interview 26.
- 28 NGO interview 27.
- 29 Funder interview 4.
- 30 NGO interview 1.
- 31 NGO participant, MEX workshop 2.
- 32 NGO interview 24.
- 33 Funder interview 4.
- 34 NGO participant, MEX workshop 3.
- 35 Funder participant, MEX workshop 2.
- 36 Funder interview 2.
- 37 NGO participant, MEX workshop 3.
- 38 NGO interview 21.
- 39 For examples of successful campaigns and strategic litigation since 2020, see the full report.
- 40 NGO interview 7.
- 41 NGO interview 3.

This research was commissioned by [Migration Exchange](#) in September 2022 and written by Ruth Grove-White and Mike Kaye.

The views expressed in this report are those of the authors, and should not be interpreted as the positions of any of the funding organisations or Migration Exchange as a whole.

If you notice factual inaccuracies or errors please contact us so this can be amended.

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