



Annual Report 2023-24



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ILPA

Email: info@ilpa.org.uk
Web: www.ilpa.org.uk

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Message from the Chair

This is a goodbye message of sorts. Although this is my last year as Chair and Trustee of ILPA, I will of course continue to be an active member; I don't know how not to be. My involvement with ILPA spans over 20 years. I started when I was a trainee, attending training and working group meetings, I became a Director in 2010 (then a Trustee when ILPA became a charity), and I have now served as Chair for the past four years after the formidable Adrian Berry stepped down in November 2020.

Looking back at what has been most challenging during my tenure, perhaps starting this role in the midst of a pandemic was not ideal. However, I was particularly proud of the amazing work of ILPA's Secretariat, Trustees, Co-convenors, and ILPA trainers in making sure we continued to deliver support to our members to help them, and in turn their clients, stay on top of the numerous COVID regulations during this particularly tough period.

Being apart physically during this period strangely brought us closer, for ILPA's reach increased after going online with some meetings being attended by hundreds of our members (and



from different regions in the UK and even overseas). But ILPA is also a community, and we recognise the importance of social interaction, which is why we wanted to go back to offering in-person events as soon as possible, whilst still remaining accessible to all – and so hybrid as the happy medium looks set to stay.

Of late it has been the attack on this community of ours that has been really difficult to comprehend – how has it come to this? Four years ago, immigration lawyers were being targeted by the then Government for doing their job, and immigration law firms were being physically attacked. Our calls for the negative rhetoric to stop went unheeded, and in August this year we saw it all come to a head with riots in the streets, deliberately targeting people seeking asylum and immigration practitioners.

We are grateful to ILPA's Secretariat and the Well-being and Racial Justice and Equality Working Groups for coming together to offer support to members and a safe space to share their experiences. It was an extremely difficult meeting for all, with one member describing it as the toughest meeting we've had at ILPA. We are also thankful to the Law Society, and particularly Nick Emmerson, for the solidarity shown during this time. What we feared thankfully did not come to bear and communities across the UK were galvanised into action as a result and turned out to show their support and determination that anti-migrant sentiment should not define the UK.

This summer's events served to remind us, lest we forget, that immigration will always be a political hot potato and a convenient scapegoat. To counter that, we need to stay on top of the latest developments, and be looking not just to apply the law but also to seek to change it for the better by contributing to ILPA's influencing work.

ILPA is 40 this year and I understand when the founders came together to set it up, they thought it would be made up of 100 or so practitioners at most. So I hope they are proud that ILPA is now a community made up of over 4,500 practitioners, NGOs, academics and students and increasing by the day. The positive impact that it has had on practitioners' development and in turn their clients and the law that we practise through its policy work is immeasurable.

We are grateful, as ever, for the tireless stellar advocacy and policy work of the legal team over the last year, led by ILPA's Legal Director, Zoe Bantleman, which covered the full breadth of immigration, asylum and nationality law. I urge you to read the summary of their influencing work as I am not going to do it justice here. Suffice to say the high regard that external NGOs, parliamentarians and stakeholders have to ILPA's briefings is a testimony to the leadership role ILPA now takes when it comes to challenging legislation, policy and practice impacting migrants.

Given the constant barrage of changes to rules and regulations that members as well as ILPA's legal team have had to deal with, our approach necessarily has been reactive. However, in this last year we have held a series of roundtable meetings with members and stakeholders to gather thoughts and ideas to help ILPA take a more proactive approach. The latest of these

was the roundtable convened by ILPA's Legislation Working Group, to discuss potential repeal of and amendments to immigration and asylum legislation introduced by previous Governments. It's an exciting new chapter for ILPA and one I hope you will be fully involved in.

For our part as Trustees, we have worked hard to ensure that ILPA continues to carry out the purposes for which it was established, and I am grateful for the contributions and support of my fellow Trustees. Over the last year we, together with ILPA's CEO and members of the Secretariat, reviewed ILPA's finances and progress against objectives, and monitored and addressed risks facing ILPA. We also discussed ILPA's new strategic plan for the next three years and our vision, mission and values. As a result, and following member input, these have been revamped to better reflect ILPA's offering and the work that it does.

I am also grateful to ILPA's CEO, Jonathan Griffin, who in the relatively short time he has been at ILPA has made tremendous inroads in setting solid foundations for ILPA to continue to grow and flourish. Over the last 12 months, he together with ILPA's Secretariat, including ILPA's Training Officer, Courtney Glanfield, Content and Digital Channels Manager, Jenny Rayner, and ILPA's Administration Officer, Olivia McCarthy, have worked to improve services to members which I hope you will continue to see the benefits of.

On finances, we are grateful to Lana Norris for her diligent work and to Matthew Lewis, ILPA's Treasurer, whose contribution and support has been invaluable. We also thank our funders – including the Paul Hamlyn Foundation, Trust for London,

and the Legal Education Foundation – for providing essential support without which ILPA would not be able to deliver some of its services or carry out its important policy work.

We are also grateful to all the funders of the Strategic Legal Fund – Esmée Fairbairn, Trust for London, the Legal Education Foundation, Paul Hamlyn Foundation and Unbound Philanthropy – and to Claire Tindale for her work managing the SLF and SLAC. The SLF has been an important source of funding for the sector for over 13 years, and helps to support litigation that will promote respect for the rule of law and is of particular importance for small charities who would not otherwise have the capacity to engage in pre-litigation research and development, so we hope we can continue to count on their support.

ILPA relies on its members and funders for its survival, and we want to celebrate another anniversary in 40 years' time, so pick ILPA, attend its training, share your knowledge at its meetings, and be an active member of our community. Don't just apply the law, help us fulfil our mission to improve law, policy and practice. For at a time when the rule of law seems to have taken a backseat to political convenience, our role in defending it is more important than ever.

It has been a privilege to serve as Trustee and then Chair and work with the brilliant staff of the Secretariat, fellow members of the Board and all of you, so thank you.

Hazar El-Chamaa
Chair

Message from the Chief Executive

The period since our last report has been marked by significant endings and beginnings.

We have seen the end of the Conservative Government, and hopefully an end to ill-thought-out, inhumane immigration policies. The new Labour Government has made a positive start by scrapping the Rwanda plan.

The AGM marks the end of Hazar El-Chamaa's term as an ILPA Trustee and Chair, and the start of Andrea Als' tenure. I am fortunate to have worked with Hazar. She has always been positive and supportive, as well as a constant source of good ideas. I am looking forward to working with Andrea in the coming months and years. Andrea is exceptionally well qualified to take on the role, having experience of business and human-rights related immigration, Home Office engagement and charity governance.

This autumn has also seen the end of our three-year strategic plan, and the beginning of a new one. We held a strategy day with Trustees in the summer to consider what we have been able to achieve and what lessons we have learnt over the last three years. We also sought feedback from members about the various services we have been providing. This has led to the plan that appears on page 10. It is an evolution of the previous plan rather than a departure because members were overwhelmingly positive about the work we have been

doing. Our net promoter score (which is the most widely used measure of satisfaction) from this year's annual member survey was the highest it has been since we started measuring it eight years ago.

This positive feedback is a tribute to the work members of the Secretariat have been doing with the support and guidance of Trustees. Looking at each of the work streams:

Legal: the legal team, led by Zoe Bantleman, continued to play a key policy role in the sector. Their legal expertise, and that of ILPA members, has had various positive impacts (perhaps most significantly in pushing back against the Rwanda plan). These are detailed on pages 12-21.

SLF / SLAC: last year saw extraordinary demand for funds to support strategic litigation (we distributed £245,000 compared to £100,000 the year before). We were able to meet this demand primarily because of the efforts and expertise of the fund's manager, Claire Tindale.

Information: our weekly email update is put together by Jenny Rayner. It is notable that more members are saying it is "essential" compared to last year. So, if you are not currently reading it, please have another look. She has also formed a members' Editorial Advisory Board which advises on content and has led to the publishing of more analytical articles.

Training: having seen our training provision dip last year due to staffing challenges, we have made various changes to ensure that we can provide a constantly high-quality service in future. These include forming a members' Training Advisory Board to oversee the programme, and automating ticketing. Courtney Glanfield has done an excellent job implementing these changes and we are expecting to put on a greater number and variety of events next year, including four hybrid conferences.

Membership: we have also revamped our membership staffing, creating two specialist roles, one focused on processing memberships and the other on member engagement. We are expecting this will lead to increased numbers of members and greater use of the services we provide.

Operations: our Finance Manager, Lana Norris, continues to play a key role in our work. This year, as with all previous years, the independent examiner has approved, without reservation, our financial processes.

The value of the services ILPA provides largely depends upon the guidance we receive from members. We are therefore grateful to everyone who shares their time to complete our surveys and serve on our advisory boards. We are particularly grateful to those members who have joined our Committee of Trustees (and to Matt Lewis, who, as an accountant, has greatly improved the reporting and management of our finances). If you have not been actively involved with ILPA in the past, please consider doing so in the near future.



Jonathan Griffin
CEO

About us

The Immigration Law Practitioners' Association is a membership organisation established in 1984 by a group of leading immigration law practitioners. We are a registered charity (No. 1155286) and a company limited by guarantee (No. 2350422).

Our Vision

- A fair and effective immigration system that respects human rights and the rule of law.

Our Mission

- Empowering members to provide the best possible advice and support for migrants, and
- Collaboratively working to improve law, policy and practice.

Our Values

- **Collaborative:** We recognise that we have the greatest impact when we respectfully share, support, and collaborate with one another. We believe we are stronger together.
- **Excellence:** We aim for the highest standards in everything we do, taking pride in the quality of our work and the services we provide.
- **Empowering:** We strive to equip all those navigating the UK's immigration, asylum and nationality system with the knowledge, resources, and support they need.
- **Transformative:** We seek to improve and reform law, policy, and practice to create a fair and just legal system for all.



Committee of Trustees

The Committee of Trustees is elected annually by the membership. The work of members is supported by a Secretariat of paid staff.

Chair	Hazar El-Chamaa, Penningtons Manches Cooper LLP
Secretary	Ayesha Mohsin, Southwark Law Centre
Treasurer	Matthew Lewis

Members

Andrea Als	Solicitor and Director, Vialto Partners
David Ball	Barrister, The 36 Group
Sophie Barrett-Brown	Senior Partner and Head of UK Practice, Laura Devine Immigration
Gabriella Bettiga	Director, MGBE Legal
Aisha Choudhry	Senior Associate, Bates Wells
Tanya Goldfarb	Senior Consultant and Head of Business Immigration Team, Bindmans LLP
Grace McGill	Partner and Head of Immigration Division, Burness Paul LLP
Julie Moktadir	Partner, Stone King

Patrons

Adrian Berry, Garden Court Chambers (re-appointed January 2024)
Elsbeth Guild, Kingsley Napley and University of Liverpool (appointed January 2022)
Alison Stanley, Bindmans LLP (appointed March 2024)

Staff

Chief Executive	Jonathan Griffin
Legal Director	Zoe Bantleman
Senior Legal Projects Manager	Claire Tindale
Legal Officer	Niamh Fegan
Legal and Parliamentary Officer	Berivan Gunes
Finance and Office Manager	Lana Norris
Membership Manager	John Keane (until September 2024)
Membership Engagement Manager	Tara Nabili (from November 2024)
Training Officer	Courtney Glanfield
Content and Digital Channels Manager	Jenny Rayner
Administration/SLF Project Officer	Olivia McCarthy



Overview of our work

Strategic Plan 2024 - 2027

Our strategic aims and priorities are to:

1. Use our specialist legal expertise to engage in a constant dialogue with relevant bodies regarding how to improve immigration, asylum, and nationality law, policy, and practice
2. Support litigation that will promote respect for the rule of law
3. Organise, maintain and develop forums that enable members to discuss issues and co-ordinate action
4. Deliver a high-quality training programme that meets the needs of our members
5. Be a source of essential information for members
6. Increase ILPA membership so that a greater proportion of practitioners in immigration, asylum and nationality law are members
7. Develop our fund-raising activities
8. Create a working environment in which all staff can flourish.

Working Groups

ILPA members are invited to join the thematic and regional working groups relevant to their area of work and geographical region. All groups are co-convened by members and aim to carry out the following kinds of work:

- influencing policy;
- developing ILPA positions;
- identifying emerging and systemic issues;
- sharing of views and information.

The working groups impact the shape of ILPA's policy work, and provide member-led spaces for specialist input on and discussion of a wide range of issues affecting members' daily practice of immigration law.



“Working groups are especially useful for providing an opportunity to share current experiences with other practitioners. I always leave with useful information that helps me better advise my clients.”

ILPA Member

We welcome those members who have become co-convenors this year, and extend our thanks to all our co-convenors and especially those who have stepped down from their role in the past year: Sophie Humes of Bristol Law Centre, from the South West Working Group, Miglena Ilieva of Laura Devine Solicitors from the New York Working Group, John Vassiliou of Shepherd and Wedderburn from the Scotland Working Group and Kat Hacker of the Helen Bamber Foundation from the Well-being Working Group.

Thematic Working Group Convenors

Courts and Tribunals	Rowena Moffatt, Doughty Street Chambers Nicola Burgess, GMIAU Allan Briddock, One Pump Court Chamber Alex Papatotiriou, Richmond Chambers (from October 2024)
Digitalisation	Andrew Tingley, Tingley Dalanay Jane O'Loughin, The University of Edinburgh Monique Hawkins & Kezia Tobin, the3million (shared) Victoria Welsh, Laytons ETL
Economic Migration	Tom Brett-Young, Veale Wasbrough Vizards LLP Anushka Sinha, Vanessa Ganguin Immigration Law James Perrott, Mayer Brown International LLP
European	Alison Hunter, Wesley Gryk Solicitors LLP Jonathan Kingham, LexisNexis PSL Immigration
Family and Personal	Katie Dilger, Wesley Gryk Solicitors LLP Nicole Masri, Rights of Women Nath Gbikpi, Leigh Day Solicitors Bryony Rest, David Gray Solicitors
Legal Aid	Polly Brendon, Freedom from Torture Ayesha Mohsin, Kalayaan Laura Smith, JCWI
Legislation	Adrian Berry, Garden Court Chambers
Racial Justice and Equality	Duduzile Moyo, Refugee Action Unkha Banda, Deighton Pierce Glynn Amna Ashraf, Burness Paull
Refugee	Mark Symes, Garden Court Chambers Amy Childs, The 36 Group Ferial Saada, Ferial Solicitors Melissa Darnbrough, Greater Manchester Immigration Aid Unit Monika Nollet, Asylum Aid

Removals, Detention and Offences

Bahar Ata, Duncan Lewis
Pierre Makhlouf, Bail for Immigration Detainees
Sairah Javad, JCWI

Well-being

Aisha Choudhry, Bates Wells
Deepa Chadha, UKCISA
Emily Heinrich, Wesley Gryk LLP
Samia Yaqub, IBB Law LLP

Children

Operates as an email group only

Regional Working Group Convenors

New York

Tanya Goldfarb, Bindmans
Jennifer Stevens, Laura Devine Solicitors

North West

Lucy Mair, Garden Court North Chambers
David Pountney, GMIAU
Emma Morgan, Shoosmiths LLP
Shara Pledger, Pinsent Masons LLP

Scotland

Anushya Kulupana, JustRight Scotland
Barry Price, Latta and Co.

South West

Marie-Christine Allaire-Rousse, Gya Williams
Immigration
Glyn Lloyd, Newfields Law
Myra Leung, Burges Salmon Solicitors

Yorkshire and North East

Chris Cole, Parker Rhodes Hickmott Solicitors
Ish Ahmed, Bankfield Heath Solicitors
Emma Brooksbank, Freeths LLP
Nick Gore, Carter Thomas Solicitors
Bryony Rest, David Gray Solicitors

Our influencing work

Over the past year, ILPA has continued to undertake extensive advocacy and policy work across the full breadth of immigration, asylum and nationality law. Wherever possible, this has been carried out in collaboration with colleagues across the third sector, academia, and practice, and we are very grateful to all those individuals and organisations – including many of our members – who have contributed to our work. Whilst it would be impossible to list all the work we carried out over the past year, below are some of the key areas in which we have been involved.

Key Activities and Achievements

Safety of Rwanda (Asylum and Immigration) Act 2024


Following on from our leadership role in the fight against the Illegal Migration Act 2023, ILPA again led the charge against the Safety of Rwanda (Asylum and Immigration) Bill, now Act, as it made its way through Parliament. We issued **numerous Briefings**, including Joint Briefings with JUSTICE, Freedom from Torture, Liberty, Amnesty International, and as part of the Refugee and Migrant Children’s Consortium; we signed a **Joint Civil Society Statement** along with over 250 charities and organisations across the UK; we submitted **Joint Evidence** with JUSTICE to the House of Lords International Agreements Committee (IAC) on the UK-Rwanda Treaty, referred to in the IAC’s subsequent **Report**; and ILPA’s Legal Director gave **oral evidence** to the Joint Committee on Human Rights, subsequently referred to by Lord Alton in the House of Lords.

Alongside our Parliamentary briefings, we sent a Joint Letter to the Home Secretary on the Voluntary Departures Policy, an Open Letter to the then Prime Minister, Rishi Sunak, and advocated for the processing of asylum claims of individuals left in limbo.

Although the Bill received Royal Assent on 25 April 2024, our Parliamentary evidence and drafting of amendments (a number of which passed in the House of Lords), helped slow the Bill’s progress, delaying the possibility of migrants being sent to Rwanda before the change of Government in July 2024 when it was announced that the Rwanda scheme would be scrapped in its entirety.



ILPA Legal Director Zoe Bantleman giving evidence to the Joint Committee on Human Rights, 17 January 2024




“I turn to the amendments in my name and those of the right reverend Prelate the Bishop of Chelmsford and the noble Baronesses, Lady Neuberger and Lady Brinton, to whom I am grateful for their support. I am also grateful for the help of ILPA, the Refugee and Migrant Children’s Consortium, and RAMP, of which I am an associate.”

Baroness Lister of Burtersett, introducing amendments to the Safety of Rwanda Bill in the House of Lords, 19 February 2024


Asylum Process

We have continued our advocacy work on behalf of those navigating the UK’s complex asylum system and those who work so tirelessly to represent them. In February we signed a **Statement of Consensus** with policy and academic colleagues, setting out our joint concerns with the asylum system and proposing a series of recommendations:



‘to return the UK to a state of compliance with its international law obligations and with its domestic constitutional norms as well as values of justice, decency, and fairness’.

In a deeply challenging migration policy environment, we were pleased that a number of changes were introduced this year as a result of our work. Following our joint intervention with Coram Children’s Legal Centre, the Home Office changed its Calais Leave Policy to permit unaccompanied children who were transferred to the UK as a result of the clearance of the Calais camp between 17 October 2016 and 13 July 2017 to be granted settlement after five years, rather than the intended ten, and the Home Office removed the additional financial burden of the application fee. Continuing our focus on children, we sent a **joint letter**, with the Refugee Council, to the Home Office in March 2024 to highlight how changes to the relevant Home Office Guidance were adversely impacting the ability of parents with refugee status to obtain refugee status for their newborn children. In our letter, we also made recommendations for streamlining the process in a way that supports refugee families with newborns while also avoiding adding these claims to the asylum backlog.




“ILPA is always looking to help find solutions or escalate to the Home Office when necessary.”

ILPA member

Utilising our strong working relationship with the Home Office, we have corresponded with them regarding the process and nature of asylum interviews. In September, the Home Office requested that individuals seeking asylum not take mobile phones or any electronic device capable of capturing picture, audio, or video, into their substantive interviews or Preliminary Information Meetings (PIMs): following our intervention, this decision was reversed. We have continued to advocate for audio recordings from interviews to be shared with individuals, and where applicable, their legal representatives, without requiring a formal request. We have issued various calls for evidence from members regarding asylum interviews, and in particular examples of shortened substantive asylum interviews, and also facilitated meetings between members and the Home Office, in order to provide the Home Office with evidence of the poor quality of asylum interviews and their adverse impact on individuals claiming asylum in the UK, and those who represent them.

We continue to show the way in which states deemed to be safe by the Executive, may not be safe in practice; this year our work focused in particular on Georgia and India following the introduction of draft Regulations, made under the Illegal Migration Act 2023, which sought to add Georgia and India to the list of safe states. Working closely with Rainbow Migration, we produced a [Joint Briefing](#) explaining the effects of the Regulations and setting out objective evidence placing doubt as to whether India and Georgia are in fact safe.



“[T]he Immigration Law Practitioners’ Association, in its joint briefing with Rainbow Migration on this measure, has highlighted the fact that the changes would strip Indian and Georgian nationals of their ability to make admissible human rights applications. That includes those seeking lawfully to extend their stay or enter the UK on the basis of human rights. That does not in any way advance the supposed purpose of the Illegal Migration Act. That is why I will not be supporting the measure today.”

Chris Stephens MP, speaking on the Draft Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 (Amendment of List of Safe States) Regulations 2024 in the House of Commons, 10 January 2024



We also provided written evidence to the Secondary Legislation Scrutiny Committee (SLSC) for its consideration of the Regulations. Following our submission, the SLSC raised a number of questions with the Home Office, and their subsequent report drew the Regulations to the Special Attention of the House of Lords. Although the Statutory Instrument has now been made, our policy work ensured it received additional scrutiny.

Digitalisation

Following the timely formation of ILPA's Digitalisation Working Group in 2023, the issue of digitalisation of the UK's immigration system has remained a key focus of our policy work over the past year, given the phasing out of physical proof of immigration status. We are extremely grateful to the Co-convenors of the Digitalisation Working Group and ILPA Trustee Tanya Goldfarb for their tireless work in this area, responding to developments at speed and attending numerous meetings to ensure issues are brought to the fore.

We have taken every opportunity to raise our concerns with the Government, including by repeatedly writing to the Home Office regarding:

- Biometric Residence Permits (BRPs);
- eVisa engagement communication for entry clearance applicants;
- the delay in the rollout of 'Public Beta' for individuals to create a UKVI account without invitation;
- 'No Time Limit' applications and other related concerns;
- legal representatives receiving clients' personal NHS and HMRC correspondence;
- 'Domestic violence' showing as immigration status, and
- improving the 'Right to Work' checks guidance for share code problems.

As well as raising these specific issues, we sent a joint open letter to the Home Office on 11 June 2024 setting out five cross-cutting concerns over the UK's transition to eVisas. The letter, which gathered over 230 signatories, was reported in The Observer.

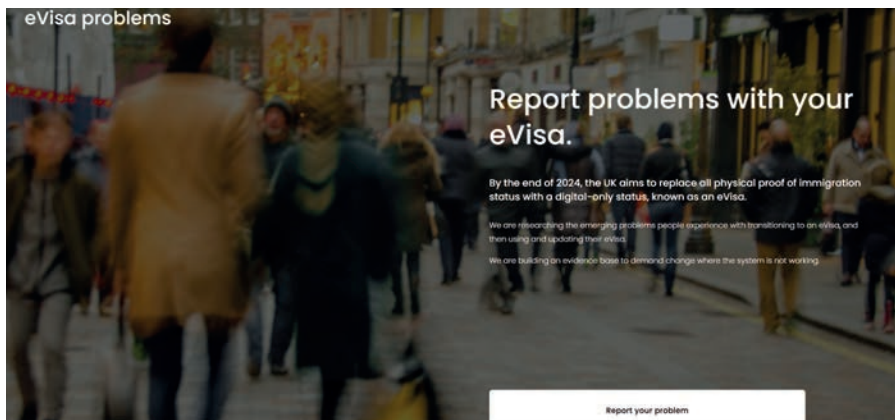
'Frightening and frustrating' move to eVisas risks repeat of Windrush scandal, experts warn

The Observer, 29 June 2024

In August, we wrote to the new Home Secretary, Yvette Cooper, and Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Migration and Citizenship, Seema Malhotra, again setting out our grave concerns regarding digital-only immigration status. Following our extensive correspondence, the Home Office initiated a series of 'deep dive' sessions, open to the signatories of our letter, to look at the issues identified. In a positive development, in her response to our letter, the Minister agreed to amend the 'No Time Limit' application form, lower the evidential requirements to prove residence, and instead 'normally accept a declaration that the customer has not been outside the UK for more than two years'. The Home Office has sought and ILPA has provided feedback on the draft Guidance.

Alongside our engagement with the Home Office, we provided numerous quotes and information to the media to raise public awareness of the seriousness of the issue. Media coverage includes articles in, for example, i news and The Observer, and ILPA's Legal Director, Zoe Bantleman, was interviewed on Times Radio.

We are also working closely with a number of key organisations, including the 3million with whom we launched an on-line reporting tool and supported their online petition. Through the Digital Status Services Stakeholder Forum, on which we sit, we have been instrumental in setting up an escalation route for ILPA members to use when ordinary methods of resolution fail.



Minimum Income Requirement

On 4 December 2023, the then Home Secretary, James Cleverly, addressed Parliament with the Government's five-point plan aimed at significantly reducing the UK's net migration. Part of this plan involves incrementally increasing the Minimum Income Requirement (MIR) for partner visas from £18,600 to £38,700. Following this announcement, we published a Response to the Home Secretary's Legal Migration Statement setting out the reasons why certain groups would be unfairly and disproportionately affected by the increase. We also sent Joint evidence, with the grassroots lived-experience group, Reunite Families UK, to the SLSC asking that they draw the relevant Statement of Changes to the special attention of the House. ILPA has since worked closely with the Brexit Couples Project (ILPA's Legal Director sits on their Advisory Board) and Reunite Families in addressing this issue.

In September, the new Home Secretary, Yvette Cooper, wrote to the Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) asking it to review the financial requirements for family visas, and in particular the level of the Minimum Income Requirement. Following MAC's call for evidence, ILPA wrote to MAC to request clarity in its Review into 'Family visa financial requirements'. We are preparing our response in conjunction with the Brexit Couples Project and Reunite Families, drawing on the legal expertise and lived experience of practitioners and their clients.

Fees and Fee Waivers

Our work in this area seeks to advocate for fair, proportionate fees, with fee waivers in place for all settlement applications on human rights routes. Following on from our Joint Briefing from civil society on the Immigration and Nationality (Fees) (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations 2023 last year, we joined forces with 15 organisations working on migrants' rights and migration issues to issue a Joint Debate briefing in November 2023, in which we made a series of recommendations. Baroness Lister subsequently moved a Motion to Regret the Regulations in the House of Lords which, although ultimately withdrawn, brought our significant concerns regarding the increased fees before Parliamentarians.

In our work on fee waivers, we raised with the Home Office the issue of invalid fee waiver tokens, which resulted in mitigations being put in place for new tokens to be issued and the validity period extended. We also alerted them to the concerning trend of rejected fee waiver applications without additional information being requested. In September 2024, we sent a response to the ICIBI Call for Evidence on Fee Waivers, and, following a meeting with the Head of Family & Human Rights at the Home Office, we sent a detailed letter setting out our proposal to simplify the fee waiver process. Finally this year, in response to the publication of updated caseworker guidance for applications for a fee waiver, we wrote to the Home Office setting out why the revisions may adversely affect vulnerable individuals, including families, who may require a fee waiver.

Safe Routes

Safe routes enable those in need of refuge to come to the UK without having to risk their lives making perilous, irregular journeys or endure the hardship caused by delays in processing asylum claims. It is our firm belief – given that safe routes are supplementary to, but should not supplant, a well-functioning asylum system – that the UK should both increase the number of safe routes available and ensure that the schemes for existing safe routes are fair, just, and accessible to all who are eligible.

In February 2024, without warning or public consultation, the Government introduced changes to the Ukraine Schemes, including closing the Ukraine Family Scheme to new applications with immediate effect, closing the Ukraine Extension Scheme to new applications, other than from UK-born children, from 16 May 2024, and reducing grants of leave from 36 to 18 months. ILPA immediately responded by submitting Joint Evidence to the SLSC, with the Work Rights Centre, who was working on the frontline and advising affected individuals. The Work Rights Centre and ILPA followed this up in August 2024 with a joint report, drawing on the experiences of more than 200 Ukrainians.

ILPA was one of 75 organisations who signed a joint letter in April 2024 calling for the Home Secretary to urgently create a Gaza Family Scheme to enable family members of Palestinians in the UK to reunite with their loved ones and offer temporary sanctuary until it is safe to return.

Immediately following the General Election in July 2024, we sent a joint open letter to the Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer, signed by more than 150 organisations and individuals, urging the UK Government to honour its commitments towards Afghans in need of safety. This was covered by the Independent on 5 July 2024. We further wrote to Seema Malhotra, Under Secretary of State (Migration and Citizenship), on 9 October 2024, calling on her to take immediate action to expand the scope of family reunion policy to include family members of all Afghans who have found safety in the UK.

Access to Justice


A significant part of our advocacy work for improved access to justice centres on urgent reform of the legal aid system. Although the system remains in a state of crisis, there was some positive news this year in that our response to the Legal Aid Agency's consultation on proposed changes to the 2018 Standard Civil Contract helped prevent harmful and regressive changes being made to the Detained Duty Advice Scheme (DDAS), thereby ensuring those in detention are not further prevented from accessing legal advice and representation.



We helped co-ordinate the sector's response to the Ministry of Justice's Review of Civil Legal Aid (ROCLA), and sent a [detailed response](#) to the MoJ's Call for Evidence. We also organised and chaired a roundtable with the MoJ on the topic of Exceptional Case Funding for immigration cases and, following on from our response to the National Audit Office's Consultation on Legal Aid in July 2023, submitted [evidence](#) to the Public Accounts Committee's inquiry into 'Value for money from legal aid'. In order to ensure we continue to have access to up-to-date data and evidence, we commissioned Baker McKenzie to conduct a review of immigration legal aid capacity.

We responded to a number of Government and Parliamentary consultations and inquiries this year, including on '[Possible amendments to the power to set-aside a decision](#)', '[Changes to the procedure rules on the provision of written reasons for decisions](#)', and '[Interpreting and Translation Services in the Courts](#)'. We also sent letters on concerns regarding remote attendance at in-person hearings without prior notice, support of litigants in person, and refused adjournment applications, and commented on the Draft Practice Direction of the Immigration and Asylum Chamber of the First-tier Tribunal.

In January this year ILPA was invited to attend the inaugural meeting of the HMCTS Tribunals Jurisdictional Engagement Group (JPEG) and we remain part of this group. We are also grateful to Rowena Moffatt, Co-chair of our Courts and Tribunals Working Group, for attending meetings of the Judicial Improvement Group and raising issues identified by ILPA members.



“ILPA is at the forefront of both policy work and engagement with the Government and other stakeholders.”

ILPA Member

Detention

Our work in this area this year focussed on the need to protect vulnerable individuals in detention. Following our response, and the responses of other civil society organisations, to the draft Adults at Risk in Immigration Detention Caseworker Guidance and Adults at Risk in Immigration Detention Statutory Guidance, the Home Office made a number of changes before publishing the finalised guidance documents. Despite these improvements, there remained a number of concerns leading the sector to issue a [Joint Briefing](#) on the Statutory Guidance. We provided feedback on the Draft Detention Services Order (DSO), Use of Force Policy for Adults in Detention, asking for the DSO to be substantially revised to include sections on the use of force against detained individuals with mental health difficulties, a robust and efficient internal review process, and preservation of dignity in compromising situations, and that an Impact Assessment be conducted. We also commented on the suggested amendments to Rule 62 of the Detention Centre Rules 2001.

Following the General Election, we assisted Detention Action, Bail for Immigration Detainees and Medical Justice in producing a series of [briefings](#) for new MPs to introduce them to the law, policy and practice of immigration detention in the UK.

Economic Migration

Our Economic Migration Working Group has continued to be incredibly active this year and we are very grateful to the Co-convenors and all those members who have helped both to identify systemic issues, and to provide evidence and examples to be submitted to the Home Office in order to strengthen the case for improvements to the Rules and Guidance.

Throughout the course of the year, we have raised numerous issues surrounding Skilled Worker Visas, including Certificates of Sponsorship, salary going rates (particularly regarding discrepancies between relevant guidance and the Immigration Rules) and immigration health surcharge (IHS) fees calculations. In March we [wrote](#) to the Head of Work Services at the Home Office in response to the updates to the 'Sponsor a worker: sponsor guidance part 2' Guidance, and specifically to ask how the changes to the Immigration Rules on 4 April



December 2023 meeting of ILPA's Economic Migration Working Group

2024 would affect Certificates of Sponsorship requested before that date. We issued comments on issues for skilled workers in the Statement of Changes HC 590 and sent a number of follow-up emails to the Home Office to raise individual cases.

We attended regular meetings with the Home Office's Work Services Team which has served as a conduit for information between members and the Home Office. We raised issues identified by ILPA members which led to amendments, clarifications and corrections, including on: reporting hybrid working arrangements; the fashion industry endorsement under Appendix Global Talent; border officials not following the correct process for people entering the UK on Permitted Paid Engagement (PPE) visas; and wording on Gov.uk for Global Talent endorsement requirements. The Work Services Team also requested feedback from ILPA regarding refusals of licence applications involving 'self-sponsorship' in order to inform their policy in this area; for this we sent detailed information, informed by ILPA members, and we are particularly grateful to James Perrott, Co-convenor of the Economic Migration Working Group, for his work on this.

Simplification of Rules

Throughout this year we continued our role as an active member of the Simplification of the Rules Taskforce, both reviewing and commenting on changes to the Immigration Rules and alerting the Taskforce to specific issues and problems in the existing Rules. Of note this year, we provided feedback on the Draft Appendix Adoption and Appendix Crossing the Border Rules and comments on the Home Office's 'Leave Outside the Rules and discretion under the Immigration Rules' draft guidance.

We also continued to bring systemic issues impacting migrants to the attention of Home Office officials, including on Appendix Private Life – Settlement for Young Adults and Children, and on Sole Responsibility and Serious and Compelling Circumstances. There remain concerns surrounding Long Residence and to address this, we sent letters to the Home Office on PBS Dependants whose Lead Applicant is Granted ILR on the Basis of Long Residence and on issues in Appendix Continuous Residence for Long Residence Applications in the Statement of Changes HC 590.

Many of these systemic issues are raised by members in our working groups and we thank all those who have contributed to this area of our work.

“ILPA is so willing to listen, and take up issues in meetings and correspondence with the HO.”

ILPA Member

EU Settlement Scheme and Related Issues

Our European Working Group has this year continued its focus on issues with the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS). In November 2023, we sent a joint letter with the3million to the then Home Secretary, James Cleverly, and the then Minister for Immigration, Robert Jenrick, regarding our serious concerns about

rejections of late applications to the EUSS; in December 2023 we **wrote** to the Home Office's Head of EUSS & Settlement Casework regarding Breaks in Continuous Residence and Evidential Issues; in October 2024 we sent a **letter** to the Home Office regarding the withdrawal of Zambrano decisions in which the unlawful 'Realistic Prospect' test was applied; and in November 2024 we sent Under Secretary of State (Migration and Citizenship) Seema Malhotra our proposal to fix the **EUSS: Continuous Residence**.

Other Engagement

We have continued our regular meetings with commercial partners, including VFS Global and Sopra Steria (until October 2024), and most recently TLS following its appointment as the Home Office service provider for UK Visa and Citizenship Application Services.

Alongside our own work, our advocacy team is also committed to taking every opportunity to support and strengthen the work of others wherever possible. In addition to our above priorities and of particular note this year, our Legal Director assisted Women in Refugee Law to provide a detailed **submission** to the Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women and Girls to inform her visit to the UK in February 2024, we signed a **Joint Letter** to the then Home Secretary, James Cleverly, following the sacking of the former Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration (ICIBI), David Neal, and we responded to the Home Office Consultation on the OISC fee structure.

Our Legal Director has also spoken at numerous external events, conferences and webinars across the sector. Highlights included:

- 'The Labour Government and the Hostile Environment: Closing a chapter or continuing it in spirit.' Social Scientists against the Hostile Environment Conference
- 'The Erosion of Rights and Protection for Asylum Seekers in the UK: The Intersection of Law, Policy and Practice'. Hosted by SOAS
- Critical Legal Conference 2024

- 'Human Rights, The Case for the Defence.' Labour Party Conference
- 'Judicial Review Trends and Forecasts 2024'. Public Law Project.
- JUSTICE Annual Conference 2024.



ILPA Legal Director Zoe Bantleman speaking at 'Human Rights, The Case for the Defence', hosted by Baroness Chakrabarti
Photo credit: James Wise

In summary, over the past year ILPA has:

- **Responded to 8 Government consultations, Parliamentary Enquiries and Calls for Evidence**
- **Submitted evidence to Parliamentary Committees on a further 3 occasions**
- **Issued 9 Parliamentary briefings**
- **Sent 45 letters to the Home Office and other Government departments**

as well as attending regular meetings with the Home Office and corresponding with them on a range of issues on behalf of members and their clients.



Safety of Immigration Practitioners

We believe that:

- an independent legal profession is fundamental to ensuring access to justice, equality before the law, and the proper functioning of a democracy
- the government should do its utmost to create conditions in which lawyers are able to freely perform their professional duties, and are safeguarded by authorities if their security is threatened as a result of carrying out their professional role.

Following on from our [Statement on the Safety of Immigration Practitioners](#) published in August 2023, ILPA input into discussions which informed the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights's February 2024 report: 'Protecting the Defenders – Ending repression of human rights defenders assisting refugees, asylum seekers and migrants in Europe'.

The issue of safety became of paramount importance in August 2024 as the UK experienced widespread racist, anti-migrant, Islamophobic, and far-right violence and aggression, including the specific targeting of immigration practitioners. We responded by:

- Offering support and solidarity to members and other affected practitioners
- Individually contacting each of the targeted organisations to offer our support, assistance, and guidance
- Sharing information and resources, including advice on safety
- Issuing a [public statement](#) and [press release](#)
- [Writing](#) to the Prime Minister, Home Secretary and Justice Secretary
- Lobbying the Home Office to suspend in-person appointments
- Liaising with the Legal Aid Agency and other organisations
- Supporting sector-wide responses
- Engaging with the media to provide quotes and background information (see, for example, ILPA's Chair of Trustees, Hazar El-Chamaa, quoted in the [Guardian](#) on 6 August 2024)

“As immigration law practitioners, we call on the Government to create conditions in which we are able to perform our professional duties, including by representing and upholding the human rights of migrants and those targeted based on their appearance, without fear for our safety. Where our security is threatened as a result of carrying out our essential and proper function in a democracy, the Government and law enforcement agencies should investigate and monitor threats to our safety.”

ILPA Statement, 5 August 2024

We are very grateful to the Co-convenors of our Well-being and Racial Justice Working Groups for their additional work during this period of unrest, and in particular for hosting a joint meeting to offer members support and a space to share concerns, and a subsequent sector-wide solidarity meeting with speakers from the Law Society, Bar Council, HOPE not Hate and LawCare.

Well-being

Open to all ILPA members, our Well-being Working Group was established in July 2018 to:

- Raise awareness of the importance of well-being in the professional and personal lives of immigration practitioners
- Cultivate a culture amongst immigration practitioners where well-being is discussed openly and is not stigmatised
- Ensure that all immigration practitioners know where to access help if needed.

We aim to do this by providing training, seminars and workshops addressing a variety of topics around the theme of well-being, and by providing a list of resources available to practitioners both within and outside the immigration law sector.

Alongside our meetings in response to the August riots, over the past year we have offered free vicarious trauma training to ILPA members on two separate occasions. These sessions are aimed at providing attendees with the language to discuss the impact of working with trauma and practical tools to reflect upon and manage that impact. The groups are kept purposefully small due to the nature of the content.

Our online well-being resources hub for members continues to have a wealth of material, including recommendations of books, journals, TED Talks, links to relevant professional associations, help and support lines, apps and much more. We have also set up a specific area on our Member Forum to provide members with a safe space to discuss safety and well-being issues.

Racial Justice and Equality

ILPA's commitment to racial justice and equality informs not only our legal advocacy and policy work, but also our wider communications as we seek to redress the negative messaging surrounding immigration and immigration practitioners in the media. As part of our anti-racism pledge, the Secretariat attended Unconscious Bias training in August 2024.

Also this year, the Racial Justice and Equality Working Group, in collaboration with the Well-being Working Group, undertook a member survey on issues of racial justice and well-being. We thank all members who responded to the survey; the responses received are helping to inform ILPA's future work in these areas, including our development of member services.

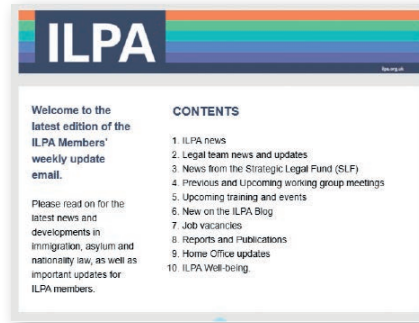
ILPA has a dedicated space on our website which brings together a range of anti-racism resources, including links to books, podcasts and webinars. We encourage all members to make use of this resource and welcome suggestions from members of new material to include.



Content and communications

Improved All-member Weekly Email

In the past year we have rebranded and relaunched our weekly all-member email, to create a single, dedicated source of information for ILPA members. Our weekly update brings together all the latest developments and changes in immigration law, ILPA's policy and advocacy work, reports and publications, as well as details of working group meetings, the latest job vacancies, training, and other events of interest to members. We are grateful to the ILPA Well-being Working Group Co-convenors for the addition of a Well-being section with weekly well-being tips.



“The weekly updates are very helpful to keep on top of the many updates and changes to policies that happen in the field of immigration law.”

ILPA Member

Editorial Advisory Board

ILPA's Editorial Advisory Board was formed during the course of 2024 to provide advice and feedback on the editorial services ILPA provides.

We would like to thank the Board members, listed below, for their contribution over the past year:

David Ball, The 36 Group

Cathryn Davies, Carter Thomas Solicitors

Christopher Desira, Seraphus

Alexander Finch, Vanessa Ganguin Immigration Law

Zoe Jacob, Boodle Hatfield LLP

Mairi Lubelska, Laytons ETL

Keelin McCarthy, One Pump Court

Amreet Notta, SAR London

Nelli Shevchenko, Seyfarth Shaw (UK), LLP

Sacha Wooldridge, Birketts LLP

New Blog

With advice and support from the Editorial Advisory Board, in July 2024 we launched a new ILPA monthly blog, offering expert, thought-leadership pieces on key issues in immigration, asylum and nationality law. We are grateful to our three Patrons, Elspeth Guild, Adrian Berry and Alison Stanley, and Natasha Gya Williams for writing our launch post, '[Reviving Regional Mobility: Options for the New Government](#)', in the days following the General Election.

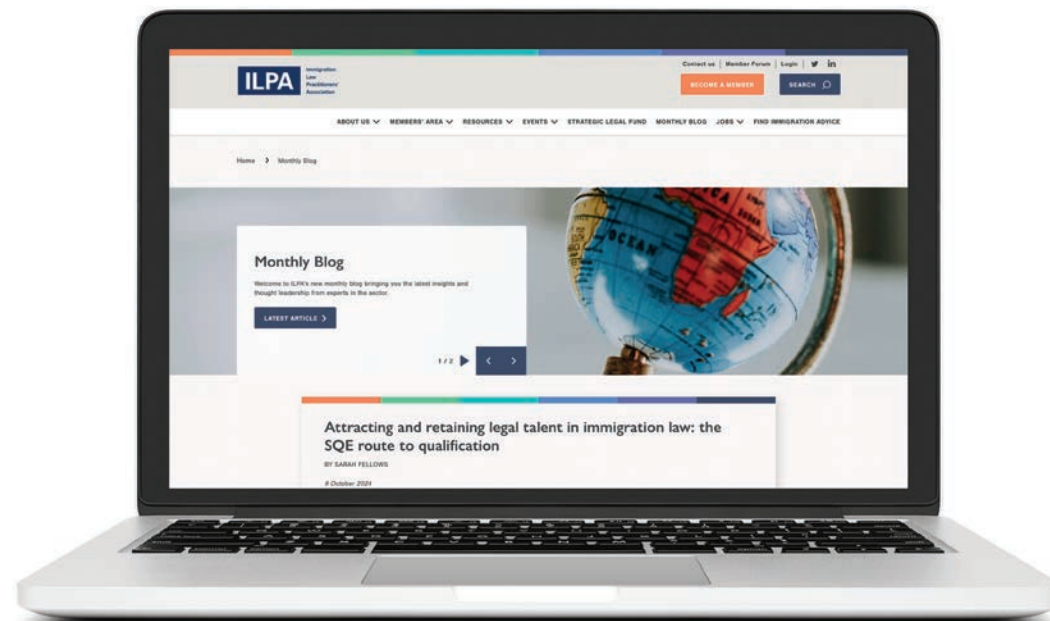
Blog posts can be read on our website at <https://ilpa.org.uk/monthly-blog/>. We are always pleased to receive suggestions of blog posts members would be interested to read: please contact us at editorial@ilpa.org.uk if you would like to make a suggestion.

ILPA Member Forum

Following member feedback, ILPA's Google Group was replaced with a new Member Forum in early 2024. The new Forum enables members to:

- Join discussion groups based around ILPA's working groups
- Select the frequency of email notifications
- Follow specific conversations
- Search for content
- 'Like' comments and 'follow' users
- Build a profile
- Moderate and flag inappropriate comments.

We are grateful to members who were involved with the Forum's design and to all those who have provided feedback as we continue to develop its functions.



Strategic Legal Advice Committee

The Strategic Legal Advice Committee (SLAC) was set up by ILPA in March 2022 as a pilot project in London and has been funded by The Legal Education Foundation since October 2022. SLAC meetings create the opportunity for NGOs and legal professionals to create connections, share information and foster a more coordinated approach to strategic litigation within the sector on emerging and existing issues impacting people seeking asylum, refugees and migrants.

SLAC Meetings

As a result of SLAC developing regional groups, the original pilot project group that started in London has been renamed General SLAC.

There have been two General SLAC meetings in 2024 where various emerging issues and strategic challenges were discussed, including in relation to legal aid for victims of trafficking, digitalisation of immigration status, and information-sharing about ongoing challenges to asylum support accommodation issues. A special meeting was held to discuss how to respond to the previous Government's policy to remove individuals to Rwanda.

Regional SLAC Groups

Following the successful launch of Scottish SLAC in November 2023, the group has met twice and discussed a variety of issues specific to Scotland, with a third meeting taking place in November 2024. Thank you to all those who have supported this new group, with particular thanks to Jen Ang from Lawmanity, Chair of Scottish SLAC, for sharing her expertise and passion for using the law to effect change.



West Midlands SLAC was launched in person on 22 May 2024 with several local organisations in attendance. Particular thanks to our keynote speaker Zoe Leventhal KC from Matrix Chambers, and Michael Bates and Emma Austin from Central England Law Centre, Danaï Papachristopoulou from Refugee and Migrant Centre, and Anne Kairu for their fantastic contributions to the panel.


Since its launch in May, there has been one further West Midlands SLAC meeting with a second planned for November.

Further regional expansion

Our next planned regional SLAC group will be in the North East and Yorkshire which we hope to launch in early 2025.

SLAC Members Feedback

We are grateful to all SLAC members who have provided feedback on the meetings held to date. Their feedback shows that the main benefits of attending General SLAC meetings are the collaboration on strategic litigation cases, evidence sharing, and information sharing about emerging and existing issues.



“I just wanted to give feedback about the launch yesterday. Fantastic keynote speakers, great introduction and very motivational. At Nishkam we really believe in Social Justice and as a frontline organisation providing a vital community safety net through Welfare Benefits, Debt, Housing, Energy Advice and Family support services, with most of the work that we do, it feels like we are placing a band-aid on significant inequalities and systemic issues. It was heartening to see the difference strategic litigation can make. I wish SLAC the very best going forward and look forward to providing our support.”

Training

In 2025 SLAC will deliver a series of free in-person trainings around the UK on strategic litigation for grassroots and community organisations, to meet the training needs identified by SLAC members. We are very grateful to the Disrupt Foundation for funding this work.

SLAC Steering Committee

In June 2024, we were pleased to form a Steering Committee to advise on, and make suggestions about, the development of SLAC in line with SLAC's objectives to strengthen strategic litigation through co-ordination and collaboration, and to build confidence around strategic litigation.

Thank you to our Steering Committee for dedicating their time and brilliant ideas to SLAC, and for championing our goals.

Alexandra Kenney, Simpson Millar

Danai Papachristopoulou, Refugee and Migrant Centre

Georgina O'Reilly, Southwark Law Centre

Rebecca Hacker, Wilsons Solicitors

Unkha Banda, DPG.

Strategic Legal Fund

In the past year, the SLF has seen an unprecedented demand. Between April 2023 and March 2024, 19 SLF grants were awarded across nine funding rounds, including four emergency rounds, with a total of £245,388 in grant funding distributed.

We are pleased to have been able to turn emergency funding rounds and emergency applications around in very little time, often in less than two weeks from the first approach, and in several cases in significantly less time.

Following successfully renewing our funding with Unbound Philanthropy, we have expanded the SLF team with Olivia McCarthy joining as Project Officer one day a week.



“The funding that SLF provided to Migrants Organise and Wilsons to challenge the use of the Bibby Stockholm as asylum support accommodation was enormously helpful.”

Brian Dikoff, Legal Organiser, Migrants Organise

Successful strategic legal challenge

In 2021 Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG) was awarded SLF funding for pre-litigation research into EU citizens with pre-settled status

(PSS) and no other right to reside being excluded from social security benefits without any consideration for their individual circumstances or fundamental rights. This group could not apply for their exclusion from benefits to be lifted, even when facing destitution or in exceptional circumstances. CPAG’s work on this issue culminated in *Secretary of State for Work and Pensions v AT* [2023] EWCA Civ 1307, [2024] 2 WLR 967:

‘Acting for AT, CPAG obtained a judgment from a three-judge panel of the Upper Tribunal which held that AT, an EU national with pre-settled status but no qualifying EU right to reside for the purposes of universal credit, is entitled to rely upon the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights even after the end of the Brexit “transition period” (i.e. after 31 December 2020). The Upper Tribunal agreed with CPAG that where a refusal of universal credit would mean such a person was exposed to an actual and current risk that they and their child could not live in the UK in dignified conditions, then the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (“SSWP”) should award universal credit. [...] The Court of Appeal, in a judgment dated 8 November 2023, dismissed the Secretary of State’s appeal against the decision of the Upper Tribunal. The Court of Appeal has refused the application for permission to appeal made by the Secretary of State against its decision.’ Read more on [CPAG’s website](#).

Expert Panel

The SLF is delighted to have recruited five new Expert Panel Members: Laura Redman, Cloisters’ Chambers; Marieke Widmann, The Children’s Society; Derek Bernardi, LawStop; Michael Bates, Central England Law Centre; and Andy Sirel, JustRight Scotland.

We would like to thank the Chair of the SLF Expert Panel Manjit Gill KC, and all the panel members for their time, consideration, guidance and dedication to the SLF over the past year, and in particular for going above and beyond to meet the additional demand for funding.

Training

ILPA again delivered a packed programme of training in the past year, enabling practitioners to remain up to date with the many changes in immigration and asylum law. Between November 2023 and October 2024 we ran a total of 73 events, up from 66 the previous year, including 15 free sessions for ILPA members. As always, our programme included a range of advanced courses for experienced practitioners and more introductory sessions for those new to the field.

“The trainer was excellent, she dealt with a very difficult topic in an engaging manner. I have recommended watching it back to all my colleagues.”

Attendee



Following on from our influencing work as the Illegal Migration Act 2023 made its way through Parliament, ILPA was quick to respond with a programme of free training on the IMA once the Bill received Royal Assent in July 2023. We were pleased to welcome 719 attendees across the below five sessions which were delivered free to all attendees, irrespective of ILPA membership:

- The Illegal Migration Act 2023: An Overview
- The Illegal Migration Act 2023: Entry, Settlement and Citizenship
- Challenging Detention under the Illegal Migration Act: *Habeas Corpus*
- The Illegal Migration Act 2023: Removal and Detention Powers
- The Illegal Migration Act 2023: Modern Slavery Overview

Our particular thanks to the trainers for putting together such timely and informative webinars to assist practitioners in understanding the implications of this complex new legislation. We are also incredibly grateful to the Greater London Authority, Strategic Legal Advice Committee, and the London Legal Support Trust for funding to enable this training to take place.

Sponsorship Law Conference 2024



Photo credit: White Silk Studio

Following on from the success of the 2023 ILPA Sponsor Licence Law Conference, we were pleased to again run the 2024 Conference on a hybrid basis enabling people to join online or in person at Friends House in London. Our particular thanks to the Conference's chairs, Nichola Carter, Head of Immigration at Carter Thomas Solicitors, and Nicolette Bostock, Partner at Withers, and to all our speakers, including our two guest speakers from the Home Office's Work Services Team.

“...the only unmissable event of the year.”

ILPA member

MP Caseworker and Researcher Training

Again this year, ILPA has delivered regular training on immigration and asylum law to MP caseworkers and researchers. Over the past year we have run five separate sessions, attended by a total of 63 people. Our thanks to our tutors Emma Cohen (OTB Legal), Ashley Fleming (Harper Macleod LLP), Lucy Mair (Garden Court North Chambers) and Sumita Gupta (University of Liverpool), for providing this essential training.

Webinar Recordings

We recognise that practitioners have many competing demands on their time, and not everyone who wishes to will be able to attend our live webinars. As such we are pleased to have introduced the option to purchase webinar recordings at a 15% discount for up to three months after the webinar took place. Recordings can be purchased by emailing training@ilpa.org.uk.

Free Training for ILPA Members

Alongside the free training on the Illegal Migration Act 2023, we were pleased to offer a further ten free sessions for ILPA members:

- Vicarious Trauma in the legal profession (run twice during the course of the year in order to keep group sizes small)
- 'I can't afford immigration fees'
- Transnational marriage abandonment (with Rights of Women and free for all to attend)
- Pro Bono Cost Order Training (with Access to Justice Foundation)
- Challenging Removals to Rwanda under the Safety of Rwanda Act
- A Voice for Vulnerable Court Users in the Justice System (in collaboration with Communicourt, and run four times during the course of the year)

New Training Advisory Board

Our Training Advisory Board was established over the course of the past year to provide advice and feedback on ILPA's training programme, and to ensure that training needs are met across the sector. Our thanks to all the members of the Board for their contributions:

Sophie Barrett-Brown, Laura Devine Immigration

Gabriella Bettiga, MGB Legal

Emma Cohen, OTB Legal

Hazar El-Chamaa, Penningtons Manches Cooper

Clara Gautrais, Fragomen LLP

Natasha Gya Williams, Gya Williams Immigration

Natasha Willett, Latitude Law

Thank you to our tutors

Our busy training programme is only made possible due to the dedication of our amazing team of tutors. All our tutors are ILPA members and are highly respected within the sector both for their experience and for keeping up to date with the ever-changing landscape of immigration law. This ensures our webinars remain fresh and up to date at all times. With the vast majority of our training still taking place online, our tutors are committed to ensuring the content they deliver is interactive, engaging, and relevant for all who attend. We are incredibly grateful to all our tutors for their role in ensuring the overall success of our training programme.


If you are interested in becoming a tutor for ILPA, please contact us at training@ilpa.org.uk.

Thank you to our attendees

We wish to extend our thanks to everyone who has attended one or more of our training sessions over the past year – your presence and contributions have helped ensure they remain engaging and interactive learning experiences. We look forward to welcoming you to another ILPA webinar soon!

Our training programme is published in advance on our online calendar with links to the individual Eventbrite booking pages, and also circulated to all members on a regular basis so please remember to look out for the early bird discounts when they are available.

If you have any suggestions for a new webinar topic, please let us know by emailing us at training@ilpa.org.uk.



“The training I have undertaken has been absolutely essential – extremely high-quality content and of huge value to my development.”

Membership

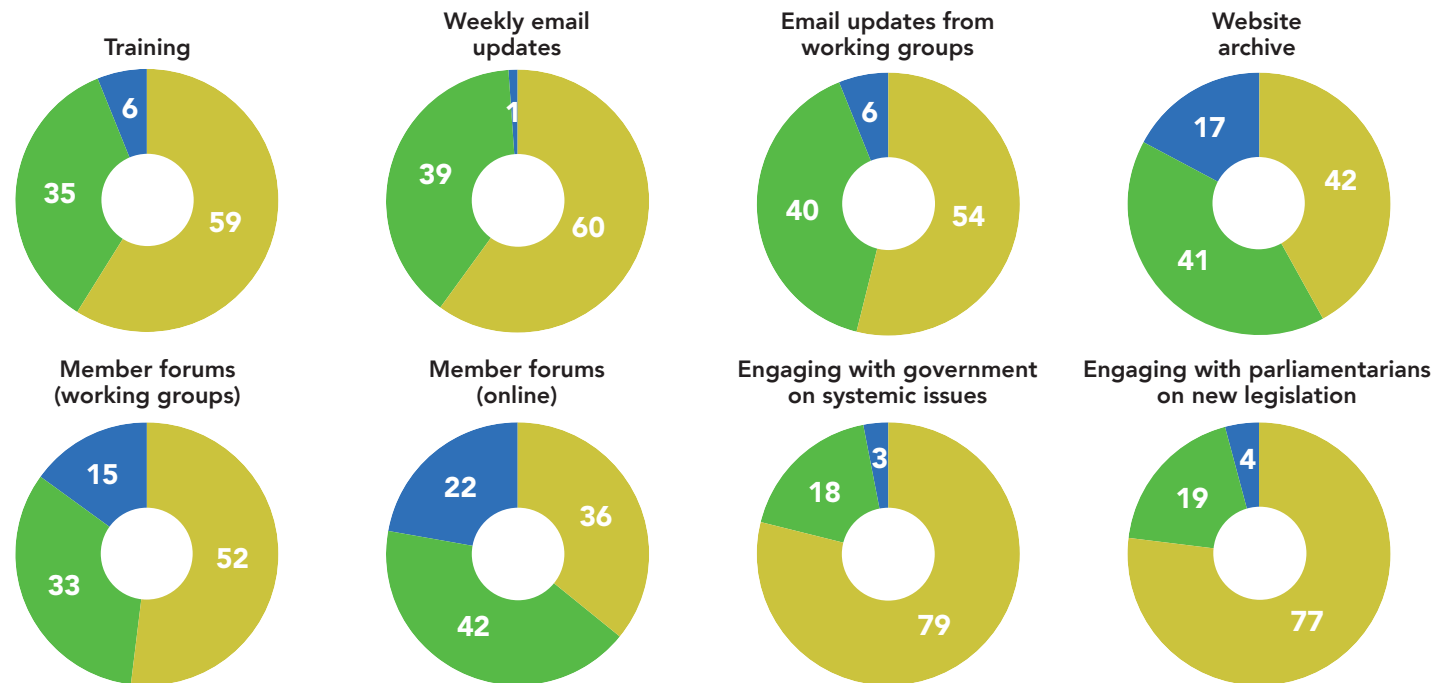
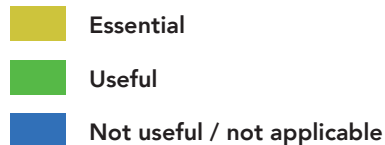
Over the past year we have welcomed 65 new members: 25 individual members and 40 organisation members. We extend our thanks to all our members for supporting and engaging with our work, whether through our many working groups, our webinar and training programme, advisory boards, member surveys, and our new Member Forum.

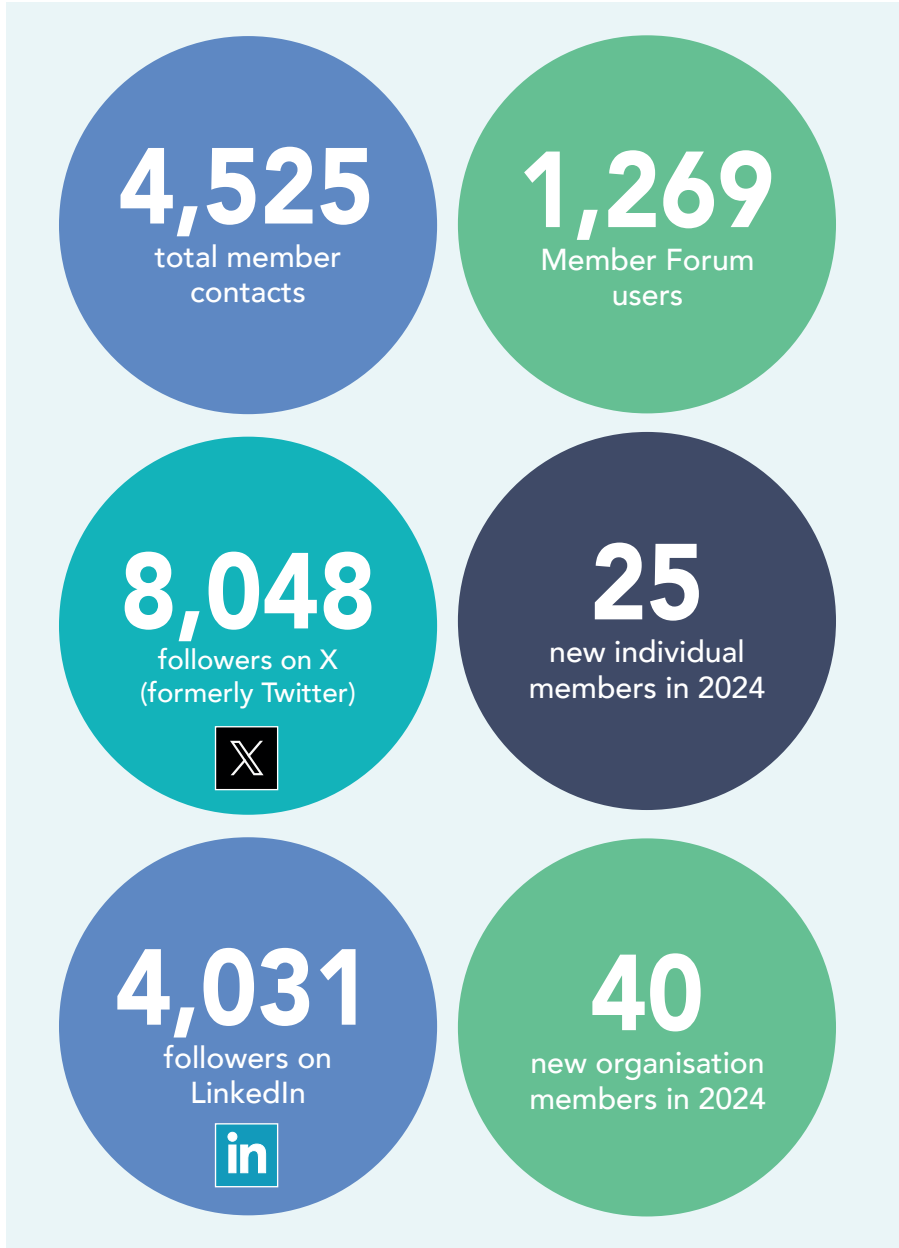
Our membership now stands at 799 members, made up of 551 organisations and 248 individuals. We have 4,525 member contacts in total (a 5.1% increase from last year's figure of 4,305) which includes all individual members and all those who have signed up under an organisation membership. We are delighted that the number of ILPA members continues to grow and that so many legal practitioners working in the immigration sector across the UK are choosing to be members of ILPA.

“...an excellent and unmatched forum for communication, networking, campaigning and training on immigration issues for practitioners.”

ILPA Member

This is how members rated the value of our various services to their work/career progression in our 2024 Annual Member Survey:

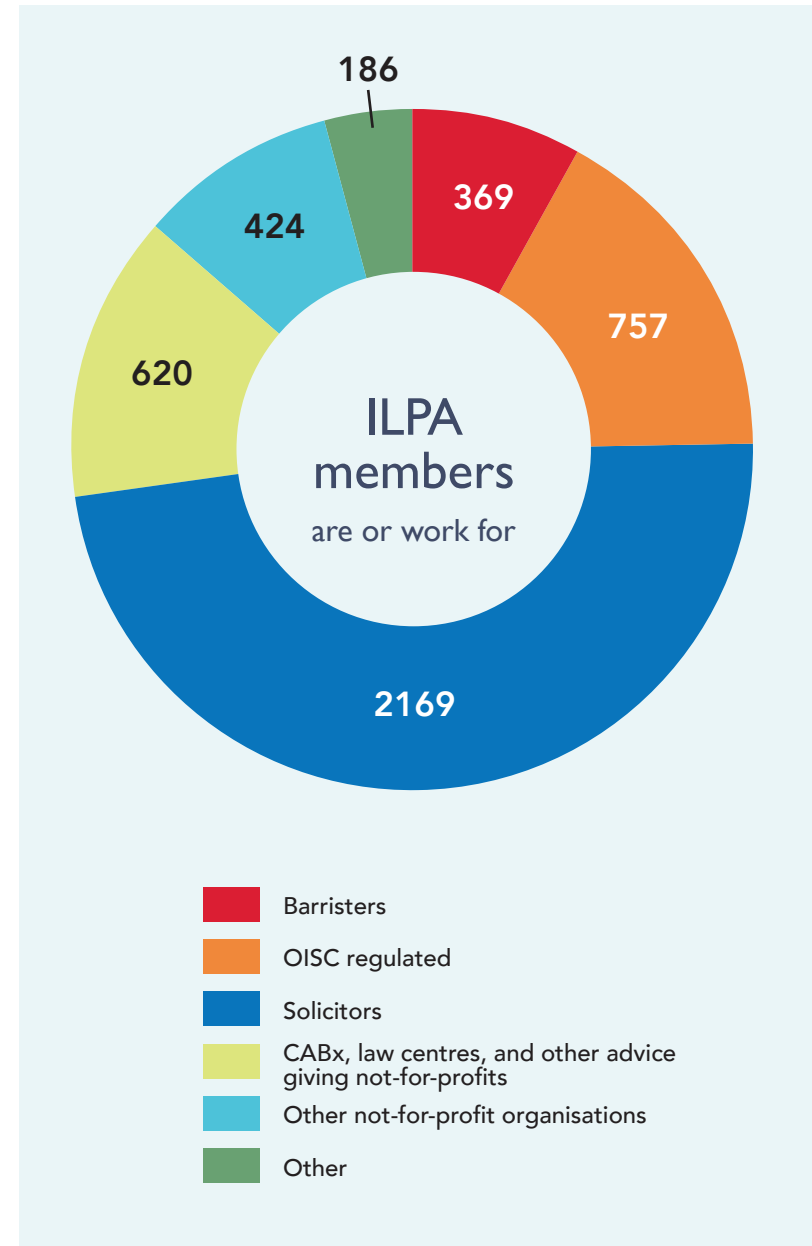
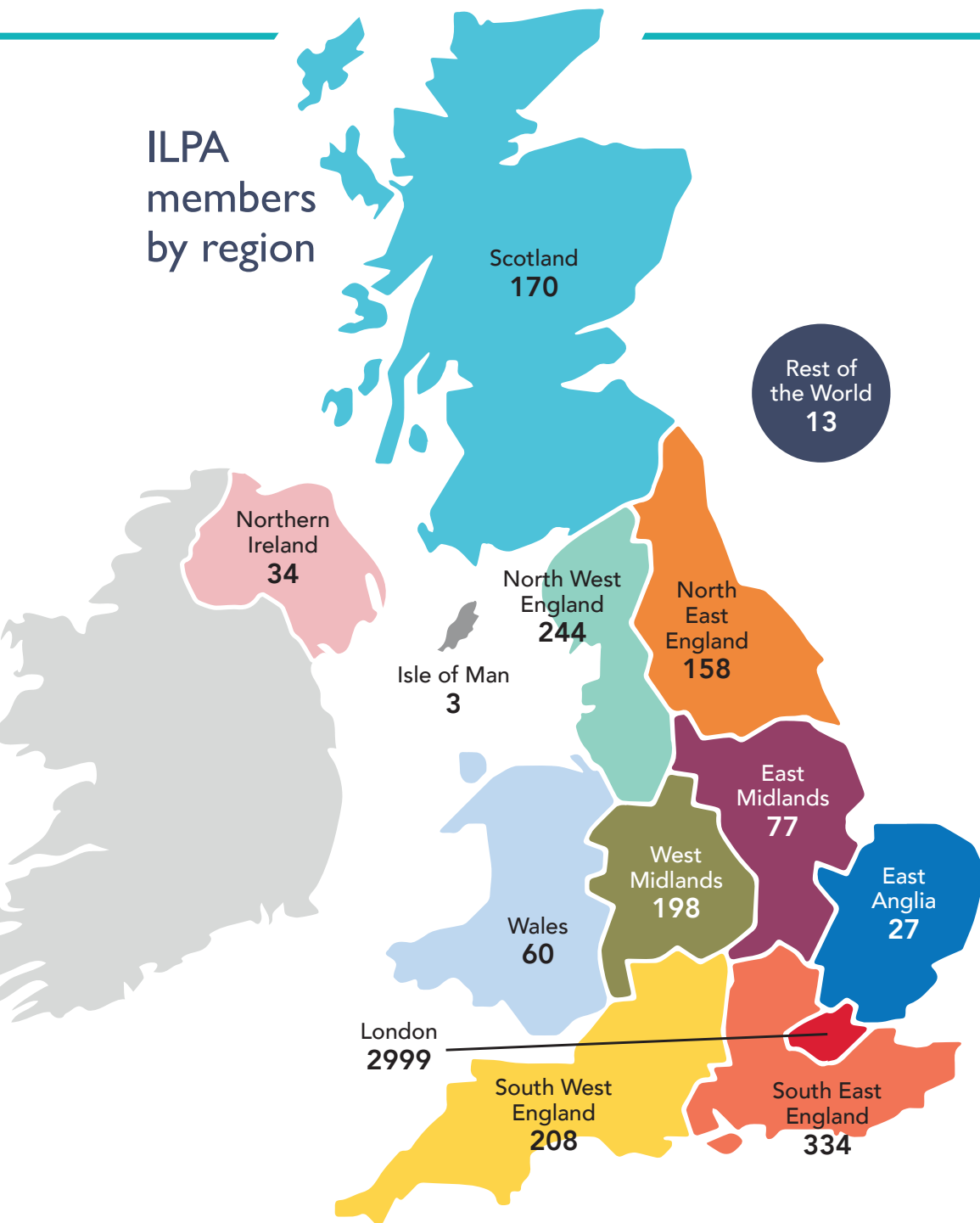




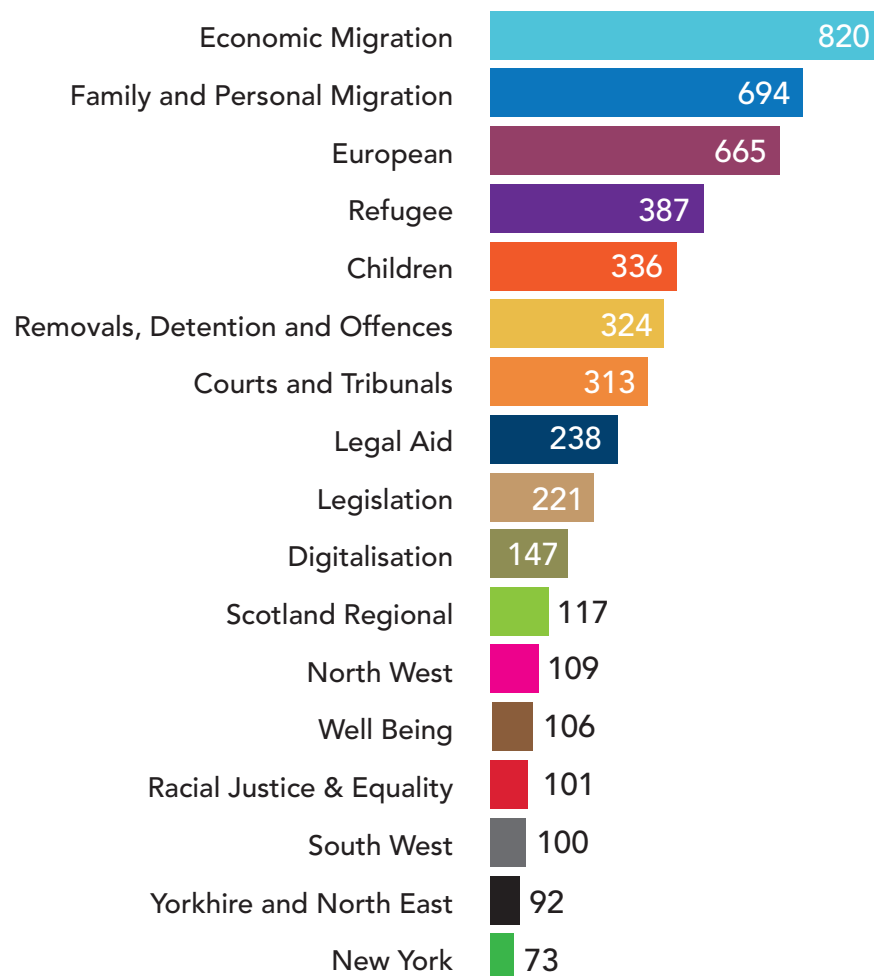
Total member contacts



ILPA members by region



Areas of interest (by working group membership)



ILPA
MEMBER
IMMIGRATION
LAW PRACTITIONERS'
ASSOCIATION

Reminder of our Member of ILPA Logo

Please remember to use the ILPA member logo on your websites and in email signatures. It's a great way to show your support and commitment to our objectives.

Finances

Accounts for 2023-24

The independently examined accounts for the financial year ended 31 March 2024 with a net deficit of £190,992 (of which £78,592 is attributable to the successful distribution of previous years' Strategic Legal Fund grants).

ILPA's overall income for 2023-24 is £729,493, which is £36,969 (5.3%) higher than in 2022-23 (£692,524) and carried-forward funds of £632,364. Looking in greater detail at ILPA's income for the year 2023-24, it can be seen that:

- Income from training decreased to £122,640 in 2023-24 from £168,607 in 2022-23. This was due to temporary resourcing issues, which have now been resolved and we expect revenues to be significantly higher in the next financial year.
- Income from membership increased to £207,432 in 2023-24 from £188,910 in 2022-23, as a result of better member retention rates as well as contribution from fees increased.
- Income from grants has increased from £300,600 in 2022-23 to £377,496 in 2023-24 as a result of increases from each of our funders of up to 10% year-on-year, and the addition of an extra funder.

ILPA's overall expenditure for 2023-24 is £920,485 which is £201,880 (28.1%) higher than in 2022-23 (£718,605). This increase is due to the Strategic Legal Fund awarding more funding during the financial year compared to last year (£245,388 in 2023-24 compared to £100,835 in 2022-23); ILPA's expenditure (excluding the SLF) is £473,527 which includes expenditure on improving services, such as improvements to the existing website as well as building a new members' forum. The overall increase in expenditure for 2023-24 resulted in a net deficit of £190,992, compared to a net deficit of £26,081 in 2022-23.

ILPA continues to provide free training to its members and support them in areas identified in our annual member survey.

ILPA has allocated money to designated funds for use for specified purposes approved by the Committee of Trustees. In 2023-24, ILPA allocated £75,194 to cover ILPA's rent and service charges to May 2025 and £256,256 for allowance of staffing and other costs in the event of winding up.

As of 31 March 2024, ILPA's funds stood at £632,364. Of this, £190,742 (30.2%) was held as restricted funds and £331,450 (52.6%) was held as designated funds (see above). The remaining £110,172 (17.4%) was held as general reserves.

Since taking over the management of the Strategic Legal Fund, ILPA has awarded a total of £826,042 in grant funding to various organisations for their strategic legal work in any area of law where migrants experience disadvantage or discrimination as a result of their migration status. The amount awarded in 2023-24 is over double that was awarded in 2022-23, in part as a result of a number of emergency funding rounds, and a reflection of the need for, and the success of, this Fund.

ILPA continues to be incredibly grateful to our funders, staff, and members for supporting our work. Thanks also go to Ramon Lee Ltd for independently examining our accounts.



Matt Lewis
Treasurer

Statement of financial activities

Year ended 31 March 2024

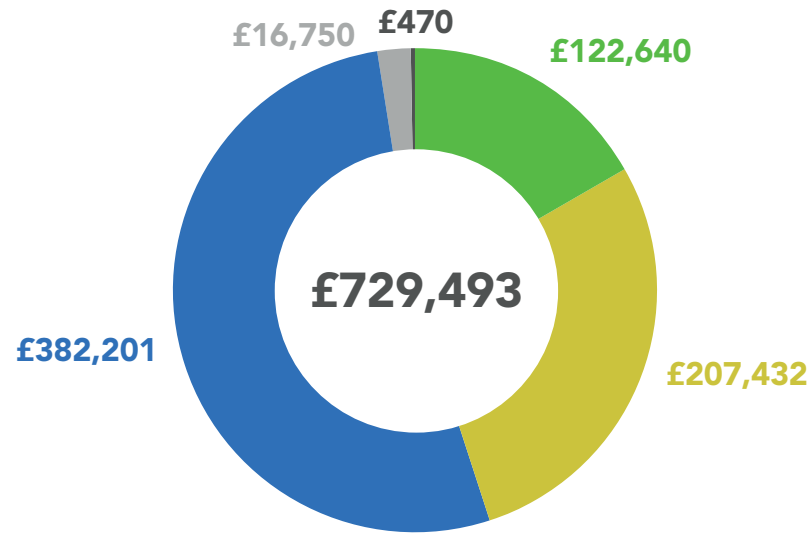
	Unrestricted Funds 2023	Designated Funds 2023	Restricted Funds 2023	Total 2023	Total 2022
	£	£	£	£	£
Income and endowments from:					
Donations and legacies	44,000	-	-	44,000	42,508
Charitable activities	345,377	-	323,366	668,743	633,517
Investments	5,605	-	-	5,605	1,749
Other Trading Activity	11,145	-	-	11,145	14,750
Total income	406,127	-	323,366	729,493	692,524
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds	2,888	-	-	2,888	41,496
Charitable activities	440,447	75,192	401,958	917,597	677,109
Total expenditure	443,335	75,192	401,958	920,485	718,605
Net (outgoing)/ incoming resources before transfers					
	(37,208)	(75,192)	(78,592)	(190,992)	(26,081)
Gross transfers between funds	(77,355)	77,355	-	-	-
Net movement in funds	(114,563)	2,163	(78,592)	(190,992)	(26,081)
Fund balances at 1 April 2023	224,735	329,287	269,334	823,356	849,437
Fund balances at 31 March 2024	110,172	331,450	190,742	632,364	823,356

Balance sheet

As at 31 March 2024

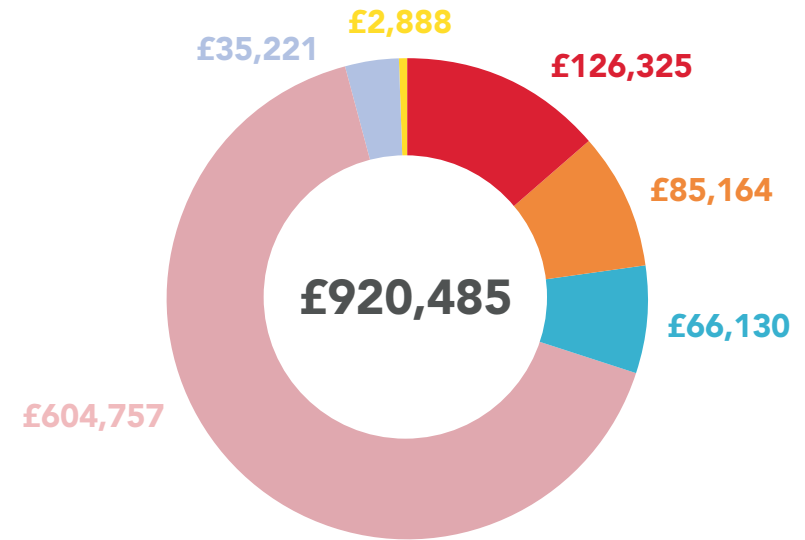
		2024	2023
	£	£	£
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets		25,720	17,626
Current assets			
Debtors	45,121		37,654
Cash at bank and in hand	694,724	975,721	
	739,845	1,013,375	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	(133,201)	(207,645)	
Net current assets		606,644	805,730
Total assets less current liabilities		632,364	823,356
Income funds			
Restricted funds		190,742	269,334
Unrestricted funds			
Designated funds	331,450	329,287	
General unrestricted funds	110,172	224,735	
		441,622	554,022
		632,364	823,356

Income for 2023-24



- Training and conference fees
- Members' subscriptions
- Grants and donations
- Other
- Consultancy fees

Expenditure for 2023-24



- Training and conferences
- Membership services
- Information services
- Legal policy research and litigation
- Governance
- Fundraising

Thank you

To our trustees and convenors

ILPA continues to benefit enormously from the invaluable contribution of time, expertise and skills that our trustees make to the committee's work. Thanks are also due to the convenors of the thematic and regional working groups, whose work is vital to ILPA across the range of areas in which we are engaged.

To our tutors and speakers

ILPA thanks all our tutors and guest speakers, who have provided their time and expertise to ILPA's training programme during the course of the year and whose high standards ensure we continue to receive excellent feedback from delegates.

To our funders

ILPA would like to thank our grant funders for their continuing support of our work:

- To the Paul Hamlyn Foundation for our Backbone Grant
- To Trust for London for funding the work of our Legal and Parliamentary Officer
- To the Legal Education Foundation for funding the work of SLAC and our Senior Legal Projects Manager's time on SLAC
- To all the funders of the Strategic Legal Fund. The five funders who have contributed are Esmée Fairbairn, Trust for London, The Legal Education Foundation, Paul Hamlyn Foundation and Unbound Philanthropy.

Why join ILPA? This is what our members have to say:

"ILPA is essential for immigration lawyers as we need to understand the law and the constant legal developments."

"I'm new to the industry and everything I've seen from ILPA to date has been first class."

"ILPA is always very effective in representing our concerns and responding in the interests of our clients."

"ILPA is unique in bringing together the interests of commercial lawyers, legal aid lawyers and NGOs. It therefore has the ability to harness and indeed to represent a wide range of opinions and experiences."

