

# The political economy of malnutrition

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## Aims

This briefing paper [Number 10] forms part of a series produced by Positive Action for Refugees and Asylum Seekers [PAFRAS]. This paper focuses on the levels of malnutrition and food poverty to which refused asylum seekers are exposed.

## Methodology

The content of the paper is derived from interviews or conversations with people who use the PAFRAS drop-in centre based in Leeds, United Kingdom.

## Key issues

The paper notes that destitution is institutionalised by the asylum system with inadequate food consumption occurring in conjunction with homelessness and acute vulnerability. Without ready access to food and no legal way of earning money many asylum seekers in the UK experience starvation and where food is available it is often of poor nutritional value. This can contribute to severe physical and mental health problems.

## Conclusions

The paper concludes that government has created a framework of destitution through a series of policy choices and that malnutrition is used as part of a conscious strategy to make life as difficult as possible for those who are too afraid to leave the country.

Web Link  
[The political economy of malnutrition \[link to external website\]](#)  
Migrant Group  
[Refused asylum seekers](#)  
Topic  
[Policy](#)  
[Asylum decisions](#)  
[Destitution](#)  
[Welfare entitlements](#)  
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[Leeds](#)  
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