

# JUSTICE - ILAG

## LEGAL AID NEWSLETTER

No. 20

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R. Smith

### Introduction

Summer in the Northern Hemisphere has had its effect: no articles ready for circulation this month. So, we have just the news. Much of this is, frankly, pretty depressing as states once committed to legal aid seek to wind down their commitment. There are perhaps two other themes to draw out of Paul's selection this month. The first is the story from the Congo that defence lawyers are being deliberately identified for assault and intimidation – a reminder of the vital role that criminal lawyers play in upholding the rule of law. The second is the story from Scotland of a firm developing their website as a new way of bringing in business. This is surely a sign of the future and the implications for the delivery of legal aid in these straightened times is likely to be a major future theme. Do get in touch if you would like to write something for the newsletter.

*Roger Smith*  
JUSTICE, UK

[Rsmith@justice.org.uk](mailto:Rsmith@justice.org.uk)

### News

These reports are largely compiled from news articles on the internet on the basis of a simple search under the words 'legal aid'. Readers must, just as buyers, beware of authenticity. The links worked at the time of writing but some will fail after a period of time.

The legal profession is facing some unquestionably difficult times and the future of it remains unclear. Day after day, week after week the headlines paint a bleak picture for most of us, and as much as we all would like it to, the talk of 'cuts' just will not go away: "*Weaknesses in legal system deny women justice*"; "*Dream of affordable justice fades*"; "*Access to justice under threat*"; and "*Legal aid cuts will serve up rough justice for vulnerable*" are just a few of such headlines. This is obviously a huge concern. What we do know is that the legal profession is changing and with it the way that legal services are delivered is also changing. The changes to date have not been welcomed and appear to further limit access to justice. The Legal Aid Bill in England and the legal aid changes made in New Zealand for example, have been heavily criticised. Many legal professionals and academics across the globe however, recognise the issues in their respective jurisdictions and are doing all they can to make a difference. Certain news items below indicate that there have been various technological developments that are playing, and will continue to play, a massive part in legal service delivery. This work cannot be underestimated and the profession should continue to look for innovative ways to improve legal services delivery, and with it, access to justice.

This section is compiled by **Paul Ferrie** of the *University of Strathclyde*.

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## Australia:

**Justice out of reach for millions of women** – News.com (Australia) – 07/07/11

Read more: <http://www.news.com.au/breaking-news/justice-out-of-reach-for-millions-of-women/story-e6frku0-1226090070416#ixzz1X57lxu1F>

**Calls for SA justice reforms over disabled access to courts** – ABC News – 26/08/11

Read more: <http://www.abc.net.au/worldtoday/content/2011/s3303001.htm>

**Queensland Government gives free legal aid to landholders** – Australian Mining – 31/08/11

Read more: <http://www.miningaustralia.com.au/news/queensland-government-gives-free-legal-aid-to-land>

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## Bangladesh:

**Weaknesses in legal system deny women justice** - The Financial Express Bangladesh – 19/08/11

Read more: [http://www.thefinancialexpress-bd.com/more.php?news\\_id=146847&date=2011-08-20](http://www.thefinancialexpress-bd.com/more.php?news_id=146847&date=2011-08-20)

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## Canada:

**Time for more transparency in Canada's courtrooms** – CBC News – 07/07/11

Read more: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/story/2011/07/07/f-vp-henry.html>

**Oppal seeks legal aid funds** – Canada.com – 09/07/11

Read more: <http://www.canada.com/Oppal+seeks+legal+funds/5077212/story.html>

**Goar: Dream of affordable justice fades** – The Star – 09/08/11

Read more: <http://www.thestar.com/opinion/editorialopinion/article/1037220--goar-dream-of-affordable-justice-fades>

**Shpoonkle Announces Service Release in Canada Connecting Lawyers and Clients** – SF Gate – 10/08/11

Read more: <http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/g/a/2011/08/10/prweb8683615.DTL#ixzz1X7OFNCIs>

**Top judge sounds alarm over Canada's poor access-to-courts ranking** – The Globe and Mail – 13/08/11

Read more: <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/canadas-poor-ranking-in-access-to-courts-should-be-wake-up-call-chief-justice-says/article2128862/?from=sec431>

**Justice must be affordable** – Winnipeg Free Press – 16/08/11

Read more: <http://www.winnipegfreepress.com/opinion/editorials/justice-must-be-affordable-127816338.html>

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## China

**Three Sisters & a Legal Aid Centre** – TrustLaw – 05/07/11

Read more: <http://www.trust.org/trustlaw/news/three-sisters-a-legal-aid-center>

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## Democratic Republic of the Congo

**Congo lawyers threaten to suspend legal aid** – TrustLaw – 30/08/11

Read more: <http://www.trust.org/trustlaw/news/congo-lawyers-threaten-to-suspend-legal-aid>

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## East Timor

**East Timor draft legal aid law needs more work – report**– Trust Law – 29/08/11

Read more: <http://www.trust.org/trustlaw/news/east-timor-draft-legal-aid-law-needs-more-work-report>

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## England and Wales:

**Legal aid bill threatens access to justice** – Ekklesia – 04/07/11

Read more: <http://www.ekklesia.co.uk/node/15047>

**JUSTICE briefing on emergency Police (Detention and Bail) Bill** – JUSTICE – 05/07/11

Read more: <http://www.justice.org.uk/news.php/33/justice-briefing-on-emergency-police-detention-and-bail-bill>

**Human rights blamed for sharp rise in prisoner legal aid** – The Telegraph – 07/07/11

Read more: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/law-and-order/8621229/Human-rights-blamed-for-sharp-rise-in-prisoner-legal-aid.html>

**JUSTICE briefing on Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Bill** – JUSTICE – 12/07/11

Read more: <http://www.justice.org.uk/news.php/36/justice-briefing-on-legal-aid-sentencing-and-punishment-of-offenders-bill>

**Ken Clarke's legal aid cuts will hinder teachers trying to keep unruly pupils in order** – The Mirror – 13/07/11

Read more: <http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/columnists/maguire/2011/07/13/ken-clarke-s-legal-aid-cuts-will-hinder-teachers-trying-to-keep-unruly-pupils-in-order-115875-23267261/#ixzz1X55KhYCG>

**MPs issue legal aid cuts warning** – Mirror – 14/07/11

Read more: <http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/latest/2011/07/14/mps-issue-legal-aid-cuts-warning-115875-23269613/>

**Sesame Bankhall enters legal services arena** – IFA Online – 20/07/11

Read more: <http://www.ifaonline.co.uk/ifaonline/news/2095279/sesame-bankhall-enter-legal-services-arena>

**UK legal cuts to hit refugee and migrant women hard** – TrustLaw – 20/07/11

Read more: <http://www.trust.org/trustlaw/news/interview-uk-legal-cuts-to-hit-refugee-and-migrant-women-hard>

**Access to justice under threat** – Lexology – 22/07/11

Read more: <http://www.lexology.com/library/detail.aspx?q=19f0fcc4-1c32-4810-89b3-f88e2f9b6369>

**The lawyers trying to give deaf people a hearing** – The Guardian – 11/08/11

Read more: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/law/2011/aug/11/deaf-law-clients-aid-services>

**Legal Aid cuts – penny wise but pound foolish?** – Farleys Solicitors LLP – 12/08/11

Read more: <http://www.farleys.com/blog/legal-aid-cuts-penny-wise-but-pound-foolish>

**Legal aid will help riot victims who've lost their homes rebuild their lives** – Sound off for Justice – 12/08/11

Read more: <http://soundoffforjustice.org/legal-aid-will-help-riot-victims>

**Family Law Bar Association criticises legal aid cuts** – Family Law – 17/08/11

Read more: <http://www.familylaw.co.uk/articles/FLBA17082011-652>

**Major legal services charity killed by cuts** – New Legal Review – 18/08/11

Read more: [http://www.cpaglobal.com/newlegalreview/4940/major\\_legal\\_services\\_charity\\_k](http://www.cpaglobal.com/newlegalreview/4940/major_legal_services_charity_k)

**Bill 'to exclude even more' from free legal services** - The Co-operative Legal Services – 22/08/11

Read more: <http://www.co-operative.coop/legalservices/latest-news/Legal-Services/bill-to-exclude-even-more-from-free-legal-services/?ArticleId=800707098>

**Legal aid: plan for 10% cut raises fears of more law centre closures** – The Guardian – 22/08/11

Read more: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/law/2011/aug/22/legal-aid-law-centre-closures>

**Legal Aid bill threatens justice for migrants** – Migrant and Refugee Communities Forum – 23/08/11

Read more: <http://www.mrcf.org.uk/legal-aid-bill-threatens-justice>

**Legal aid cuts spark insolvency fears** – Insolvency News – 24/08/11

Read more: <http://www.insolvencynews.com/article/show/Legal-aid-cuts-spark-insolvency-fears>

**Free legal services offer 'vital assistance'** – The Co-operative Legal Services – 25/08/11

Read more: <http://www.co-operative.coop/legalservices/latest-news/Legal-Services/free-legal-services-offer-vital-assistance/?ArticleId=800710989>

**Legal Services Outsourcing means serious questions for traditional legal spend** – Procurement Leaders – 26/08/11

Read more: <http://www.procurementleaders.com/news/latestnews/3421-legal-services-outsourcing/>

**Paralympians warn legal aid reforms will penalise serious accident victim** – The Guardian – 27/08/11

Read more: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/law/2011/aug/27/paralympians-legal-aid-reforms-accidents>

**OJ Simpson trial lawyer planning first online service in UK** – The Telegraph – 28/08/11

Read more: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/newsbysector/supportservices/8727339/OJ-Simpson-trial-lawyer-planning-first-online-service-in-UK.html>

**Patients' Legal Aid Cuts Will Cost NHS Tens of Millions** – Huffington Post – 28/08/11

Read more: [http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/2011/08/28/patients-legal-aid-cuts-w\\_n\\_939391.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/2011/08/28/patients-legal-aid-cuts-w_n_939391.html)

**Cuts to legal services 'betray domestically abused women'** – The Co-operative Legal Services – 30/08/11

Read more: <http://www.co-operative.coop/legalservices/latest-news/Legal-Services/cuts-to-legal-services-betray-domestically-abused-women/?ArticleId=800713492>

**Shop around for legal advice** – The Guardian – 31/08/11

Read more: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/law/2011/aug/31/legal-advice-retail-outlets>

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### Ghana:

**Harmonization of legal regime needed to deliver legal aid** – Ghana News Agency – 22/08/11

Read more: <http://www.ghananewsagency.org/details/Social/Harmonization-of-legal-regime-needed-to-deliver-legal-aid-Director/?ci=4&ai=32622>

**Ministry of Justice will render transparent legal services – Amidu** – Ghana Web – 31/08/11

Read more: <http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/artikel.php?ID=217568>

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### India:

**Law colleges must set up legal aid services** – The Times of India – 05/07/11

Read more: [http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2011-07-05/goa/29738647\\_1\\_law-colleges-legal-aid-law-students](http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2011-07-05/goa/29738647_1_law-colleges-legal-aid-law-students)

**Coming up, free legal aid for Chandigarh poor** – Indian Express – 20/07/11

Read more: <http://www.indianexpress.com/news/Coming-up--free-legal-aid-for-Chandigarh-poor/819790/>

**Kelsa opens legal aid clinic**– IBN Live – 20/07/11

Read more: <http://ibnlive.in.com/news/kelsa-opens-legal-aid-clinic/168370-60-122.html>

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### Indonesia:

**Mobile courts ease families' legal costs** – The Jakarta Post – 07/07/11

Read more: <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2011/07/07/mobile-courts-ease-families%E2%80%99-legal-costs.html>

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### Kenya:

**Kenya: We Need to Revamp Entire Justice System** – All Africa – 16/08/11

Read more: <http://allafrica.com/stories/201108170728.html>

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### Malaysia:

**Complete guidelines for legal aid body, says Govt** – The Star Online – 14/08/11

Read more: <http://thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?file=/2011/8/14/nation/9299756&sec=nation>

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### New Zealand:

**Bill to rein in legal aid costs introduced** – New Zealand Herald – 11/08/11

Read more: [http://www.nzherald.co.nz/politics/news/article.cfm?c\\_id=280&objectid=10744450](http://www.nzherald.co.nz/politics/news/article.cfm?c_id=280&objectid=10744450)

**Justice denied under legal aid cuts – Labour** – New Zealand Herald – 12/08/11

Read more: [http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c\\_id=1&objectid=10744532](http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=10744532)

**Contentious legal aid law passes reading**– Stuff.co.nz – 16/08/11

Read more: <http://www.stuff.co.nz/national/politics/5454574/Contentious-legal-aid-law-passes-reading>

**Minister rejects criticism of legal aid changes** – Radio New Zealand News – 17/08/11

Read more: <http://www.radionz.co.nz/news/political/82705/minister-rejects-criticism-of-legal-aid-changes>

**Judge hits out at legal aid delays** – The Southland Times – 25/08/11

Read more: <http://www.stuff.co.nz/southland-times/news/5503122/Judge-hits-out-at-legal-aid-delays>

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### Niger:

**Niger donates N3m to Legal Aid Council** – Sunday Tribune – 21/08/11

Read more: <http://www.tribune.com.ng/sun/news/4846-niger-donates-n3m-to-legal-aid-council>

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### Northern Ireland:

**Legal aid cuts will serve up rough justice for vulnerable** – Belfast Telegraph – 08/07/11

Read more: <http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/opinion/news-analysis/legal-aid-cuts-will-serve-up-rough-justice-for-vulnerable-16020483.html#ixzz1X50zWyXx>

**Talks 'end legal aid stand-off'** – Yahoo News – 09/08/11

Read more: <http://uk.news.yahoo.com/talks-end-legal-aid-stand-off-164432361.html>

**Ford 'encouraged' by legal strike talks** – News Letter – 14/08/11

Read more: [http://www.newsletter.co.uk/news/local/ford\\_encouraged\\_by\\_legal\\_strike\\_talks\\_1\\_2964685](http://www.newsletter.co.uk/news/local/ford_encouraged_by_legal_strike_talks_1_2964685)

**Striking solicitors to resume 'normal work'** – BBC News – 19/08/11

Read more: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-14586903>

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### Pakistan:

**'Free legal aid should only be provided to the deserving'**– The News (International) – 21/07/11

Read more: <http://www.thenews.com.pk/TodaysPrintDetail.aspx?ID=58659&Cat=4&dt=7/21/2011>

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### Republic of Ireland:

**Wealthy lawyers in strike threat on fees** – Herald Ireland – 15/08/11

Read more: <http://www.herald.ie/news/wealthy-lawyers-in-strike-threat-on-fees-2848535.html>

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## Scotland:

**Call for figures on police station duty scheme** – The Journal Online – 04/07/11

Read more: <http://www.journalonline.co.uk/News/1009951.aspx>

**Police station duty scheme "operating effectively": SLAB** – The Journal Online – 05/07/11

Read more: <http://www.journalonline.co.uk/News/1009955.aspx>

**Solicitors hit out over legal cover 'chaos'** – Herald Scotland – 06/07/11

Read more: <http://www.heraldscotland.com/news/home-news/solicitors-hit-out-over-legal-cover-chaos-1.1110456>

**Police station scheme will go ahead with or without private firms: MacAskill** – The Journal Online – 19/07/11

Read more: <http://www.journalonline.co.uk/News/1010013.aspx>

**First LawWorks Scotland clinic opens in Haddington** - The Journal Online – 12/08/11

Read more: <http://www.journalonline.co.uk/News/1010102.aspx>

**JUSTICE responds to review of UK Supreme Court** – JUSTICE – 12/08/11

Read more: <http://www.justice.org.uk/news.php/43/justice-responds-to-review-of-uk-supreme-court>

**Thorntons launches online legal services portal** - The Journal Online – 16/08/11

Read more: <http://www.journalonline.co.uk/News/1010110.aspx>

**SLAB criticised over expert report refusal** -The Journal Online – 17/08/11

Read more: <http://www.journalonline.co.uk/News/1010111.aspx>

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## South Africa:

**Rush to get free legal advice** – Daily News – 24/08/11

Read more: <http://www.iol.co.za/dailynews/news/rush-to-get-free-legal-advice-1.1123685>

**South African public get free legal assistance** – I News One – 25/08/11

Read more: <http://www.inewsone.com/2011/08/25/south-african-public-get-free-legal-assistance/71136>

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## United States:

**Legal services centre receives \$96,000 grant** – CT Post – 05/07/11

Read more: <http://www.ctpost.com/news/article/Legal-services-center-receives-96-000-grant-1452396.php>

**Pro bono catastrophe?** – The National Law Journal – 12/07/11

Read more:

[http://www.law.com/jsp/nlj/PubArticleNLJ.jsp?id=1202500525703&Pro\\_bono\\_catastrophe&slreturn=1&hbxlogin=1](http://www.law.com/jsp/nlj/PubArticleNLJ.jsp?id=1202500525703&Pro_bono_catastrophe&slreturn=1&hbxlogin=1)

**Courting Disaster: Justice can't be a budget bargaining chip** – The Sacramento Bee – 14/07/11

Read more: <http://www.sacbee.com/2011/07/13/3768390/courting-disaster-justice-cant.html#ixzz1X57UwKti>

**First Republic Bank Wins Award for Supporting Legal Aid Program for Underserved Californians** – The Street - 14/07/11

Read more: <http://www.thestreet.com/story/11185047/1/first-republic-bank-wins-award-for-supporting-legal-aid-program-for-underserved-californians.html>

**Preserve legal aid for poor** – Central Florida Future – 17/07/11

Read more: <http://www.centralfloridafuture.com/preserve-legal-aid-for-poor-1.2605962>

**Legal Services Corp. Faces Potential 26% Budget Cut; ABA President Voices Concern** – ABA Journal – 19/07/11

Read more:

[http://www.abajournal.com/news/article/legal\\_services\\_corp\\_faces\\_potential\\_26\\_budget\\_cut\\_aba\\_president\\_voices\\_con/](http://www.abajournal.com/news/article/legal_services_corp_faces_potential_26_budget_cut_aba_president_voices_con/)

**LSC Annual Report Highlights Importance of Access to Justice** – LSC – 21/07/11

Read more: [http://www.lsc.gov/press/pressrelease\\_detail\\_2011\\_T274\\_R40.php](http://www.lsc.gov/press/pressrelease_detail_2011_T274_R40.php)

**LSC Board Chairman Announces Members of Pro Bono Task Force** – LSC – 01/08/11

Read more: [http://www.lsc.gov/press/pressrelease\\_detail\\_2011\\_T274\\_R43.php](http://www.lsc.gov/press/pressrelease_detail_2011_T274_R43.php)

**Republicans Look to Kill Legal Aid** – Care 2 – 10/08/11

Read more: <http://www.care2.com/causes/republicans-look-to-kill-legal-aid.html>

**Rocket Lawyer raises \$18.5M for legal assistance** – Vator News- 11/08/11

Read more: <http://vator.tv/news/2011-08-11-rocket-lawyer-raises-185m-for-legal-assistance>

**Forum aims to increase access to justice system** – Charleston Daily Mail – 16/08/11

Read more: <http://www.dailymail.com/ap/ApTopStories/201108160697>

**Threadbare American Justice** – The New York Times – 17/08/11

Read more: <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/08/18/opinion/threadbare-american-justice.html>

**Low interest rates leave less money for legal aid groups** – The Washington Post – 21/08/11

Read more: [http://www.washingtonpost.com/business/capitalbusiness/low-interest-rates-leave-less-money-for-legal-aid-groups/2011/08/16/qIQApB0fUJ\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/business/capitalbusiness/low-interest-rates-leave-less-money-for-legal-aid-groups/2011/08/16/qIQApB0fUJ_story.html)

**Addressing the Justice Gap** – The New York Times – 23/08/11

Read more: <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/08/24/opinion/addressing-the-justice-gap.html>

**Cuts & Consequences: State budget reductions end free legal help in Nashua** – 24/08/11

Read more: <http://www.nashuatelegraph.com/news/930222-196/cuts--consequences-state-budget-reductions-end.html>

**Legal aid programs for poor deal with deep cuts** – USA Today – 30/08/11

Read more: <http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/story/2011-08-29/Legal-aid-programs-for-poor-deal-with-deep-cuts/50179062/1>

## Final Note

This newsletter has been compiled by **Roger Smith** of **JUSTICE** in London, UK. If you would like to be taken off the circulation list, add someone or contribute some content, please contact Roger by emailing [rsmith@justice.org.uk](mailto:rsmith@justice.org.uk).