

Sangeetha Iengar

Call: 2009

Contact Sangeetha Directly: 020 7353 6802 or



Sangeetha is a specialist in asylum, immigration and international human rights law with over ten years' experience of practice in these areas. She has carved her niche at the Bar by concentrating her practice on representing the most disadvantaged groups.

Sangeetha regularly appears before the First Tier Tribunal, Upper Tribunal and Court of Appeal on asylum, immigration and deportation appeals as well as appearing before the Upper Tribunal and the Administrative Court in substantive judicial review claims. Instructing solicitors particularly recommended her for her technical precision on judicial review matters involving unlawful detention and claims of trafficking which has led to her having a busy Claimant-focused public law practice. Sangeetha's strength lies in her dedication to working with vulnerable clients – be that representing unaccompanied children, victims of torture or those suffering from complex mental health problems.

As a preferred international human rights expert, Sangeetha has advised prolific journalists, activists and staff members of charities who have faced harassment, arbitrary detention, ill-treatment and torture at the hands of the State regimes they have stood up against. Through this work she has been able to secure the release or right to a fair trial for individuals in the Sudan, Gaza and Egypt.

Sangeetha undertakes a significant amount of international pro bono work. This has involved spending several weeks every year providing legal advice in situ to asylum seekers in Greece, as well as undertaking desk-based advisory work for organisations such as the Marie Colvin Journalists' Network. She is currently instructed pro bono by Hogan Lovells to advise on the feasibility of using international sanctions and terrorist financing legislation to fund reparations for Yazidi victims of sexual violence in conflict through a global fund.

As an immigration law expert, Sangeetha spent two years in Brussels working with the European Commission to improve the access to fundamental rights for undocumented children and families. In this role she was commissioned to publish a [book](#), which was instrumental in broadening the discourse on irregular migration within the European institutions and member states.

She has spent several years 'on the ground' advising governments of fragile states and parties in conflict zones. This has involved advising Governments on improving access to justice for vulnerable communities, proposing structural

Location

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improvements to formal criminal justice systems, advising on capital punishment cases, and implementing community-based justice solutions regionally. All of her work has focused on improving access to legal rights for the most vulnerable of communities.

Sangeetha has published policy papers and reports on a broad range of human rights, rule of law and migration issues. She has led and facilitated several trainings globally for DFID, the UK Foreign Office, the World Bank, UNDP and the European Commission (DEVCO). She regularly lectures on a variety of rule of law and human rights issues.

Sangeetha is frequently asked to speak at CPD-accredited seminars and appears on the radio, TV and print media as a 'refugee law expert.' She is an Associate of Border Criminologies, a department of the Faculty of Law at Oxford University and sits on the Board of Fenix Humanitarian Legal Aid, an NGO operating in Lesvos. Sangeetha has been nominated as a Rising Star for the Women in Law Awards 2020 – awards supported by the Bar Council.

Sangeetha is qualified to accept instructions via the **direct access** scheme.

Publications

- March 2020 **'The EU have chosen strong borders over legal duties – The migrant crisis in Greece is the inevitable result of years of seeing the right to asylum as a weapon rather than an obligation'** Commissioned and published by The Times, UK
- March 2020 **'Europe's Borderlands: The New Shooting Range for European Power Politics'** Commissioned and published by Border Criminologies, Faculty of Law, University of Oxford
- April 2019 **'Greece: Dispossession through the guise of protection'** Published by Border Criminologies, Faculty of Law, University of Oxford
- December 2015 **'Explaining how to use a problem-driven iterative adaptation approach in restructuring pre-existing institutional reform programmes'** Produced for DFID through the LASER (Legal Assistance for Economic Reform) programme
- April 2015 **'An Assessment of Rigorous Impact Evaluations in Commercial Law and Justice Reforms'** Commissioned by DFID
- February 2015 **'The impact of the Ebola crisis on Sierra Leone's commercial law and justice priorities'** (*co-author*) Commissioned by the Justice Sector Coordination Office of Sierra Leone
- December 2014 **'Access to Legal Aid in Somaliland: Considering the Role of the Public Defender's Office in Somaliland Against a Demand-Side Analysis of Legal Aid Needs'** Commissioned by DFID, presented to the Ministry of Justice of Somaliland
- December 2014 **'Accessing Legal Aid in Somaliland: Considering the Role of Paralegals'** Commissioned by DFID, presented to the Ministry of Justice of Somaliland
- November 2014 **'The Importance of Associations: Developing a Bar Association for Somaliland'** Commissioned by DFID, presented to the Somaliland Women Lawyers Association and the Somaliland Lawyers Association
- January 2013 **'Children First and Foremost: A guide to the realising the rights of children and families in an irregular migration situation'** Published by PICUM, commissioned by the European Commission
- August 2012 **'The Rights of All Children in the Context of International Migration'** (*contributing author*) Published by OHCHR, Committee on the Rights of the Child

Languages

- Tamil (native)
- French (fluent)
- Hindi (conversational)

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- Spanish (conversational)
- Arabic (written only)

Immigration

Notable Cases

- Leka, R (on the application of) SSHD JR/4584/2015 successful substantive JR concerning certification of protection claim involving threat of forced marriage to a minor;
- Liksenaj, R (on the application of) v SSHD JR/900/2016 substantive JR certification challenge on a claim involving a longstanding victim of child sexual and physical abuse;
- Rhouila, R (on the application of) v SSHD JR/3793/2016 successful substantive JR of a fresh claim in relation to foreign national family carers;
- Kaur, R (on the application of) v SSHD JR/10374/2016 successful substantive JR challenge in a matter involving unlawful detention before the Administrative court; and
- SS (Pakistan) v SSHD C5/2016/2560 ongoing Court of Appeal matter concerning the proper approach to be taken in cases concerning irregular migrants who act as whistleblowers for serious criminal investigations.

Public Law

Sangeetha is regularly instructed on high profile and complex challenges, including judicial reviews and public law considerations in a variety of cases. She draws upon expertise in several different areas, including immigration, EU law, and other areas of social welfare law.

Memberships

International Bar Association (Member of the Access to Justice and Legal Aid Committee and Member of the Asia Pacific Regional Forum)

Bar Human Rights Committee

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