

Migration news roundup 18 September 2023



- Stories that inspired us this week
- International news
- UK borders and migration policy

- Specific migrant groups
- Cohesion and integration

Stories that inspired us this week

Solidaritech, one of Migration Yorkshire's Refugee Integration Service partners, won a CEO award for tech recycling. (Source: CEO Review)

The 'Tomorrow' photographic exhibition in Hull runs until 27 September and tells the story of 5 women who have survived conflict and persecution. Meanwhile, a new photo book documents the recent women's protests in Iran. (Sources: Freedom Festival, BBC, the Guardian)

Jazz band Ezra Collective won the Mercury Prize 2023, being described by music critics as the 'true sound of modern Britain' and celebrating the band's diverse influences. (Source: Independent)

International news

Nearly 7,000 people arrived on Lampedusa in Italy in just two days. The mayor called for assistance from the Italian state and for EU intervention to support the island in managing the situation. (Source: Reuters)

Germany paused its voluntary agreement to welcome 3500 people seeking asylum who arrived in Italy. The aim of the agreement was to help Italy which is one of the main points of

entry for migrants. (Source: InfoMigrants)

The Slovakian government deployed 500 troops to its border with Hungary in an attempt to patrol the area and register the growing number of 'transit migrants'. (Source: InfoMigrants)

In Iran more restrictive laws on dress code, described by the UN as 'gender apartheid', are awaiting approval. If passed, women who don't wear the hijab could face up to ten years in prison. (Source: the Guardian)

The US finalised a new rule according to which most people crossing from the southern border with Mexico into the United States will be ineligible to claim asylum. (Source: Al Jazeera)

UK borders and migration policy

A new poll found the level of public dissatisfaction with the government's handling of immigration is at its highest level since 2015, prior to the EU referendum. Failure to prevent Channel crossings was the top reason given. (Source: British Future)

Ahead of international meetings including with Europol and the French president, opposition leader Keir Starmer said Labour would look to negotiate a returns agreement with the EU, enabling the UK to return people who had entered irregularly. The UK could agree to accept some migrants from the EU, with people being able to apply at UK embassies in Europe – priority may be given to those with family members in the UK. Labour

would also process asylum claims for people who have arrived irregularly, contrary to the Illegal Migration Act. (Source: the Guardian)

Amid negotiations on a free trade deal with India, Prime Minister Rishi Sunak said this won't include changes to immigration policy. (Source: Reuters)

Here is some background to the Supreme Court hearing on the Rwanda plan, due to take place in October. Meanwhile this article gives an overview of provisions from the Illegal Migration Act due to come into force at the end of September. (Source: Free Movement)

Specific migrant groups

Plans are underway to start using the Bibby Stockholm for asylum accommodation again, following its closure last month due to the discovery of legionella bacteria on board. Meanwhile a report on asylum hotel accommodation for families and unaccompanied asylum seeking children found support and accommodation to be inadequate. (Sources: Independent, Human Rights Watch)

On young people, the Home Office have begun making legislative steps to introduce scientific age assessments for people seeking asylum which will include the use of x-rays and MRI scans to determine their age. Refusal to be tested could damage the credibility of the person in their overall asylum claim. (Sources: Home Office, Free Movement)

It has been reported that a Home Office-employed age assessment team used an online article from razor manufacturer Gillette regarding the age boys commonly start shaving to incorrectly assess the age of a child seeking asylum. The 17 year old boy from Afghanistan lived in adult accommodation for over a year and has been left traumatised by his experience. (Source: The National)

A five year old girl who was born in the UK was told she must leave the country while her mother challenges her own deportation to Nigeria. (Source: The Independent)

On modern slavery, following a recent international conference, this report argues people with lived experience should be involved in modern slavery research. Meanwhile, read the story of Christian who moved to the UK to work in care homes - he was exploited by his recruitment agency and is now being supported by Sheffield-based charity Causeway. (Sources: Modern Slavery Policy and Evidence Centre, BBC)

This article explains latest changes to the Home Office's approach to late applications under the EU Settlement Scheme, making it harder to prove 'reasonable grounds' for applying late. (Source: Bindmans)

A review of the Café Connect project supporting Hongkongers to settle, including in Yorkshire and Humber, was published. The review found the project encouraged social mixing between people on a BNO visa and host communities and could be a

model for working with other migrant groups. FaithAction will be sharing learning from the project as part of the Yorkshire Integration Festival Fringe. (Sources: FaithAction, Migration Yorkshire)

Cohesion and integration

To mark the 50th anniversary of the Chilean coup, this article reflects on the lives of Chilean refugees who fled Pinochet's regime and came to Britain in 1973, including communities that formed in Britain around political associations and cultural activities, like music. (Source: The Tribune)

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