Migration news roundup 8 April 2024



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Stories that inspired us this week

‘Rise Up’ is a one day festival coming to Leeds on 13 April, celebrating the rich Caribbean heritage of Leeds and beyond. (Source: Leeds Playhouse)

Asom Khan, a 15-year-old Rohingya boy who is deaf and nonspeaking and living in a Bangladesh refugee camp, has discovered a new passion for art and photography, which he uses to share his community’s experiences with the world. (Source: the Guardian).

International news

Bulgaria and Romania have become partial members of the Schengen area after reaching an agreement with the EU for access to the free-travel area by air and sea – there will still be border checks for land travel. (Source: Al Jazeera)

Cyprus has seen some 2,000 people arrive seeking asylum in the first quarter of 2024, compared with only 78 people during the same period in 2023. The Cyprus government has called for EU support to reduce the number of arrivals. (Source: InfoMigrants)

Outside of Europe, Human Rights Watch has called on Columbia and Panama to do more to protect people attempting to cross the Darien Gap, the dangerous route connecting South and Central America. In other news, here is an opinion piece on Canada's immigration policy. (Sources: Al Jazeera, Bloomberg)

UK borders and migration policy

Nearly 800 people arrived in the UK on small boats over the Easter weekend, taking this year's total to over 5,000. (Source: BBC)

Former immigration minister Robert Jenrick submitted an amendment to the government's Criminal Justice Bill to record and collate the nationality, visa and asylum status of every offender convicted in English and Welsh courts in the previous 12 months and present a report to Parliament each year to 'inform deportation and visa policies'. Relatedly, this new briefing covers the visa rules for foreign nationals whose presence in the UK is considered 'not conducive to the public good', including offenders. (Sources: BBC, UK Parliament)

This new briefing explains the eligibility and process of applying for a removal of the No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) condition. (Source: Free Movement)

Specific migrant groups

Due to being close to capacity to care for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, the leader of Kent County Council

called on the Home Office to enact sections of the Illegal Migration Act 2023 which would enable the Home Office to accommodate unaccompanied children themselves. Meanwhile in a recent report, the Children's Commissioner for England criticised the Illegal Migration Act in relation to unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, raising concerns around plans to use scientific age assessment, removal of unaccompanied children when they turn 18, use of inappropriate accommodation and lack of safeguarding. (Sources: Community Care, Children's Commissioner)

An elite cyclist from Ethiopia will take part in one of London's biggest bike races, but her story highlights concerns about conditions in asylum hotels. (Source: the Guardian)

There is new research on exploitation and trafficking risks for people who have arrived in the UK through the Ukrainian schemes, and a new report on the UK Seasonal Worker Scheme. (Source: FLEX)

There's a new report on university fee status affecting British National (Overseas) (BN(O)) visa holders. The report shows the impact on young Hongkongers of not having home fee status and not being able to access student finance. It calls on the UK government to follow the lead of Scotland and grant home fees status to BN(O) visa holders who have been in the UK for three years and have leave to remain. (Source: Hong Kong Watch)

This week marks 5 years since the Windrush compensation scheme was launched. Campaigners and those directly affected

by the Windrush scandal identified the scheme as 'failing' with some people having died before receiving payouts. They call for increased payments and faster processing. (Sources: the Guardian, Independent)

Due to decreased international enrolment in postgraduate degrees due to visa changes, some UK universities are cutting staff and removing some of their courses. Meanwhile, Higher London, in partnership with ApplyBoard, has launched the Study London campaign to encourage overseas students to consider London and other UK cities as their top study destinations. (Sources: Erudera, The Pie News).

Cohesion and integration

Muslim and Jewish leaders in Bradford have come together for an Iftar event during Ramadan. (Source: the Guardian)

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