Migration news roundup 22 April 2024



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Stories that inspired us this week

Bathgate Mosque in West Lothian (Scotland) reached out to people seeking asylum in a local hotel who were fasting during Ramadan, by providing them with free meals for the breaking of the fast everyday throughout the month and for Eid. One resident reflected, ‘here we feel with the Bathgate Mosque that we are with family’. (Source: STV News)

Acorn FC, a Hull based football team made up of players seeking asylum, had its first competitive match against Leeds United Foundation team at the Tigers Trust Arena. (Source: BBC)

International news

In an opinion piece on the EU’s new migration pact it is argued that the plan is undermined by several misconceptions including that tougher measures would lead to the appearance of greater control. The pact has been criticised for different reasons by people on ‘the right’ and on ‘the left’, with some EU states such as Hungary, Poland and Slovakia saying they will refuse to implement it. (Sources: Guardian, InfoMigrants)

Rights groups have criticised the efforts by the French Police to ‘clean up’ Paris by moving hundreds of migrants from a makeshift camp out of public view before the summer Olympics start in July. (Source: InfoMigrants)

UK borders and migration policy

The passage of the Rwanda Bill has been further delayed after both houses continue to disagree. The Bill will return to Parliament next week after the Lords refused to back down on amendments regarding evidence that Rwanda is a safe country and exempting Afghan serviceman from being removed to Rwanda. (Source: Independent)

People continue to arrive via small boats, with reports of a record daily number of arrivals recorded last week. (Source: Guardian)

The Home Office has begun contacting people regarding the phased transition from physical status documents to eVisas by 2025. Individuals are now being emailed with instructions to set up an online account. Despite these plans the Home Office are already dealing with data issues recording status as well as ongoing litigation about failing to provide people with physical evidence of their status where they are awaiting the outcome of an application to renew their leave. (Sources: Home Office, Independent)

In other news, a freedom of information request revealed that dozens of Home Office staff are either being dismissed or under investigation for immigration crime or fraud. (Source: Guardian)

Specific migrant groups

On asylum, the government has admitted to the Public Accounts Committee that its estimates on costings for a large-scale asylum accommodation site where inaccurate. Meanwhile, reports that properties in Bradford and Hull were being purchased for asylum accommodation have been denied by Tom Pursglove, Minister for Immigration, who said there are no intentions to procure more accommodation in these areas. (Sources: BBC, Telegraph and Argus)

On modern slavery, there's a new report on trafficking in Albania , and analysis of 2023 NRM statistics. (Sources: Asylos, IOM)

On Hong Kong, this article explores fee waiver provisions for BN(O) visa holders in the context of the wider immigration system. Meanwhile, a new exhibition at Leeds City Museum is displaying artwork created by Hongkonger artists in the UK : 'A Journey of Hope and Resilience'. (Sources: Free Movement, Instagram)

On EUSS, this blog explores the key issues and challenges faced by EU citizens in the UK today and recommendations for funders in the migration field. (Source: Migration Exchange)

On International students, the European Commission has proposed talks with the UK to look at freeing up cross-border movement for young people, including domestic fees for EU students again – which would remove some post-Brexit barriers. Meanwhile, it has been reported how loneliness can affect foreign students in the UK, so a Leeds initiative 'The Living Room' is bringing international students together in a home away from home. (Sources: Research Professionals News, Yorkshire Bylines)

On Windrush, 28 community groups have been granted funding in order celebrate the Windrush generation through various artistic and educational projects including dance, public conversations, cultural celebrations, intergenerational encounters, art installations and more. (Source: Policy Mogul)

Cohesion and integration

Britain is being represented at this year's Venice Biennale (the world's largest and most prominent art event) by Sir John Akomfrah, a British-Ghanaian filmmaker. The exhibition tells a visual and auditory story of migration and colonialism, from Tudor times up to the death of David Oluwale here in Leeds in the 1960's. (Source: Guardian)

Read this first-person account about how unsettling it can be for a person seeking asylum in the UK, threatened with being moved to the Bibby Stockholm after starting to build a new life and make local connections. (Source: Metro)

Watch ‘Defiance’, a new 3-part series documenting the experiences of the British Asian community in the late 1970’s and how they stood up against the far-right, including here in Bradford. (Source: Channel Four)

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