Migration news roundup 1 August 2022

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Stories that inspired us this week

We found two stories linked to Syria this week:

- A Syrian restaurant won a New Business of the Year award. Three men who came to Bradford as refugees set up Kunafa Tea. (Source: Telegraph and Argus)
- A community opera tells the story of a Syrian girl called 'Dalia' who comes to the UK as a refugee. (Source: the Guardian)

People gathered in Leeds to show solidarity with Ukraine to mark 150 days since the Russian invasion, remembering people and places and sharing songs and speeches. (Source: Yorkshire Evening Post)

This Italian hotel in the ski resort of Breno is run by refugees as part of a programme helping migrants to find work. So far 20 refugees have been employed. (Source: EU Observer)

Cohesion and integration

Following the recent heatwave a new study highlights racial disparities regarding heat vulnerability, with UK residents from ethnic minorities four times more likely to live in areas vulnerable to heat than white people. (Source: The Conversation)

With the spotlight on women's football for the Euros, this article celebrates the game's inclusive approach, whilst recognising there is still work to be done especially regarding under-representation of ethnic minorities. (Source: British Future)

There are just a few weeks left to watch this one-hour documentary on the Belle Vue photography studio in Bradford documents stories of migration to Bradford. (Source: BBC iPlayer)

We know language is key to integration – here's a short history of Esperanto, the 135 year old international language of peace, still aiming to build bridges between people. (Source: The Conversation)

UK borders and migration policy

The Conservative leadership election turned to migration, with both candidates fully supporting the Rwanda policy. Rishi Sunak intends to bring in a quota on the number of refugees accepted by the UK with flexibility for crises, stop Channel crossings, introduce a narrower definition of asylum and change rules so that minor crimes such as shoplifting would make overseas nationals eligible for deportation. Liz Truss would extend the Rwanda scheme to other countries, recruit more Border Force officers, and ensure the Bill of Rights addresses 'illegal' immigration. This guide concisely covers what issues are at stake on immigration (see pages 23-24). (Sources: the Guardian, UK in a Changing Europe)

Having crossed the Mediterranean, several young people from West Africa who are seeking to reach the UK said they were unaware of the Rwanda policy. (Source: inews).

Ensuring the Linton-on-Ouse reception centre for asylum seekers goes ahead, despite strong local opposition, might be particularly important to the government because Linton paves the way for a further six similar sites on ex-military bases. (Source: Telegraph)

Data from 2021 on forced marriage and female genital mutilation in the UK shows the government service gave advice and support in 337 cases. 10% of these cases were from Yorkshire and Humber. Government guidance on forced marriage is now available in British Sign Language. (Sources: Forced Marriage Unit, Home Office)

Specific migrant groups

On asylum issues:

- Government released a framework for minimum health standards at asylum seeker accommodation in initial and contingency sites, referring to Strategic Migration Partnerships (SMPs) in the process (see page 6). There's also official guidance for support organisations assisting asylum seekers on S98 or S4 support to complete HC2 certificate applications to access healthcare and prescriptions. It was developed with Bevan Healthcare in Bradford and City of Sanctuary. (Source: Office for Health

Improvement and Disparities)
- This blog outlines how rising prices are impacting people who are receiving asylum support. (Source: IMIX)

An initiative to bring LGBTQ+ Afghan refugees to the UK is described in this article and in this half hour iPlayer documentary 'Fleeing Afghanistan: Free to be Me'. (Source: BBC)

The number of people who have arrived from Ukraine through the Family and Sponsorship schemes has passed 100,000. A new application form for sponsors of unaccompanied children from Ukraine requires sponsor safeguarding checks to be completed in advance of visa applications. The new visa application process for these children will open on 10 August. The relevant guidance for sponsors and councils has been updated in this regard. (Source: Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities)

On children and young people, this briefing looks at the figures concerning children born to migrant parents in the UK. It reveals that in 2019 6% of children living in the UK were born abroad and more than a quarter of children had at least one parent born abroad. (Source: Migration Observatory)

On Hong Kong, funding for voluntary organisations and Strategic Migration Partnerships to run Welcome Hubs has been officially confirmed and a list of grant recipients published. New research on civic engagement and social integration shows that a majority of Hong Kongers trust the UK government and British society, with many starting to identify the UK as their home.

(Sources: Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, UK Welcomes Refugees)

The Independent Monitoring Authority (IMA) wrote an open letter to all airline carriers reminding them of the rights of EU nationals and official guidance on travel in response to an increase in airlines refusing to allow some EU nationals on their planes. This story highlights the difficulty experienced by a UK resident with Romanian nationality while returning to the UK. Elsewhere, a new publication shows anxiety felt by mixed European-British families, with many unable to move back to the UK with their loved ones due to the end of free movement. (Sources: Metro, IMA, Migzen)

On Windrush, this story highlights how a Jamaican man experienced the effects of the 'hostile environment'. Latest compensation data shows nearly 1,100 claims received a payment amounting to over £43 million as of June 2022. (Sources: BBC, Home Office)

International news

In the Americas,

- The International Rescue Committee has joined 100 other organisations in denouncing the US's 'Remain in Mexico' policy which has affected 75,000 migrants at the US-Mexico border.
- Nearly 50,000 migrants have taken a dangerous jungle route through Panama so far in 2022, the majority from

Venezuela.

(Sources: Telesur, Atalayar)

In Europe:

- Plans by the Netherlands to house up to 3,000 refugees on cruise ships have been labelled ‘absurd’ and illegal by NGOs.
- An NGO reports that nearly 1,000 migrants have died trying to reach Spain by sea in the first half of 2022. This is around half the level of last year, reportedly due to Morocco’s actions following improved diplomatic relations with Spain.

(Sources: the Guardian, Info Migrants)

It is the tenth anniversary of the UN Zaatari refugee camp in Jordan, which was opened to house Syrians and is home to more than 80,000 people. The article gives a detailed account of the camp. (Source: Aljazeera)

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