Migration news roundup 24 February 2025

This Migration News Roundup presents a selection of news, policy, research and statistics from the previous week on migration-related topics. The contents of each story do not necessarily reflect the views of Migration Yorkshire.

- International news
- UK borders and migration policy
- Specific migrant groups
- Cohesion and integration
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International news

With some interesting visuals, this article shows how European countries are facing a population decline due to low birth rates and restrictive immigration policies, driving economic concerns - and suggests that increasing immigration, alongside other measures, could help mitigate these challenges. Meanwhile, the Spanish government's openness to immigration has reportedly helped strengthen the economy, with migrants filling labour shortages and boosting productivity. (Source: the Guardian)

The ongoing civil war in Sudan has created a severe humanitarian crisis, displacing thousands, and overwhelming South Sudan's resources. Despite humanitarian efforts, funding freezes and the sheer scale of displacement continue to hinder relief operations. (Source: the Guardian)

UK borders and migration policy

There has been plenty of reaction to the recently-announced government policy on the 'good character' requirement for citizenship (effectively barring refugees who arrive via 'dangerous journeys' to the UK), including asking whether the new policy contravenes the UN Refugee Convention. At the same time, nearly 150 signatories from a range of refugee sector organisations and civil society have written to the Home Secretary criticising the policy. The first legal challenge to the policy has been lodged by a 21-year-old Afghan refugee, who was due to apply for British citizenship in March. (Sources: euronews, BBC, the Guardian)

Baroness Carr, the UK's most senior judge, has stated the government should publicly respect the independent judiciary regarding the Palestinian family recently granted protection under the Ukraine Scheme, and use the appeals process if they wish to challenge the decision. (Source: Middle East Eye)

No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) quarterly data has been published, including Yorkshire and Humber, with a breakdown by immigration status. Here's a useful legal guide to the NRPF condition, which stops some people with temporary immigration status from being able to receive certain benefits. (Sources: NRPF Network, Free Movement)

Specific migrant groups

New briefings have been released relating to modern slavery:

- This briefing argues that the Border Security, Asylum and Integration Bill ‘misses a crucial opportunity to drive meaningful change to ensure that all victims of exploitation are protected’, suggesting it does not tackle the main factors relating to exploitation, or address victims’ fears of immigration repercussions if they report abuse. (Source: Focus on Labour Exploitation)

- An updated policy briefing looks at the effectiveness of forced labour import bans in addressing modern slavery in global supply chains. It suggests forced labour bans may be ‘part of a smart mix of measures to address modern slavery in global supply chains... and in some cases influenced some changes in businesses and governments’. (Source: Modern Slavery PEC)

The Home Office is advertising for a Windrush Commissioner, in line with its pledge to ‘reset’ government’s approach to the scandal. This will be the first role of its kind, with the successful applicant acting as an independent advocate for those affected, and directly advising ministers. (Source: Home Office)

A new report indicates that UK public attitudes towards international students remain positive, with 61% of those surveyed stating either that numbers of overseas students

should stay at current levels, or increase. (Source: British Future)

This article focuses on the estimated cost to local authorities of looking after unaccompanied children seeking asylum. A spokesperson for the Local Government Association (LGA) raised the need for central government to provide more funding to relieve the pressure being faced by councils. (Source: the Telegraph)

Cohesion and integration

The Independent Commission on Community and Cohesion has launched a call for evidence (in writing, or by video) in partnership with British Future and Belong (deadline 28 March). Submissions are invited on the topics of social cohesion, community strength and what the government's role should be. (Source: The Together Coalition)

A new guide has been published for employers looking to hire refugees. The guidance highlights the benefits of greater refugee representation in the workforce (such as increased resilience and cross-cultural understanding) and gives advice on how to tailor induction processes and provide ongoing support to prospective refugee employees. (Source: CIPD Trust)

An article has been published on the unique challenges faced by refugees and asylum seekers from an LGBT+ background. It looks at the history of anti-LGBT+ persecution abroad; the scrutiny individuals often face regarding their sexual orientation

during the asylum process; and intersectionality issues, even post-decision, that can hinder attempts to settle in the UK. (Source: Mental Health Foundation)

Former anti-immigration campaigner, Jess Hallet, one of the six participants on Channel 4's new series ‘Go Back to Where You Came From’, has changed her views after travelling from Somalia to the UK. (Source: BBC News)

Stories that inspired us this week

A new report explores refugees’ experiences of accessing higher education in the south-west of the UK, focusing on the benefits, as well as barriers to access and progression. As the report launches, Abdullahi Abdi, a 46-year-old refugee from Somalia, reflects on his life and says ’nothing is impossible’, after graduating with an honours degree in Social Policy from the University of Bristol, which he undertook whilst also juggling work as an Uber driver. (Source: University of Bristol)

James Lokidichi, a 23-year-old athlete and refugee from South Sudan, is hoping to qualify for the Refugee Olympic Team and compete in the 2028 Summer Olympic games in Los Angeles. (Source: BBC News)

A new Performing Arts Centre theatre, built in the largest refugee camp in Africa, the Bibi Bidi camp, has become a place that offers relief and hope for future for refugees. (Source: the Guardian)

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