

Migration news roundup 23 October 2023



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Stories that inspired us this week

A literary magazine of sanctuary published its third print issue. Written and edited by migrants and refugees, it includes short stories, poems, non-fiction pieces and artwork. (Source: the other side of hope)

A new statue, 'Boy with Dove', is being planned for Sheffield's Weston Park to recognise the city's history of welcoming child refugees. (Source: Sheffield Star)

Specific migrant groups

On refugee resettlement:

- Government announced it will consult local authorities on the annual cap it will place on resettling refugees from 2025 via 'safe and legal routes', as outlined in the latest Immigration Act. This will be based on capacity to provide housing and support. (Source: Home Office)
- Both Lord Dubs and Scotland's First Minister Humza Yousaf have called for a UK refugee resettlement scheme to be created in response to the situation in Gaza. (Sources: the Guardian, Sky News)
- MPs heard calls to expand eligibility for Afghan schemes so people from a wider range of professions could benefit from resettlement opportunities. There's a new statistical

briefing on Afghan asylum seekers and refugees in the UK.
(Sources: BBC News, Migration Observatory)

The National Audit Office (NAO) published a report on the Homes for Ukraine scheme which has cost £2.1 billion supporting 131,000 arrivals. Among its findings, it notes the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) has not obtained clear data on how councils have spent funding or on homelessness relating to those leaving hosting placements, while safeguarding continues to be a key risk. (Source: NAO)

Some Hongkongers in the UK continue to feel unsafe as they experience repression from the Chinese government. (Source: the Guardian)

On asylum issues:

- Once again, the Bibby Stockholm vessel in Dorset is accommodating asylum seekers. (Source: Independent)
- National data about asylum and modern slavery claims is presented in new visualisations. (Source: Red Cross)
- This academic article highlights issues for LGBTQI+ people seeking asylum following the 2022 Nationality and Borders Act – in particular, relating to the potential transfer to a third country, and the increased standard of proof required from claimants. (Source: Cambridge University Press)

This report focuses on outstanding issues related to the EU Settlement Scheme, namely the backlog of undecided applications, late applications and the potential for loss of status.

(Source: Migration Observatory)

Following anti-slavery day, modern slavery news includes:

- Foreign nationals were far more likely to receive a negative reasonable grounds decision than UK nationals in the first six months of this year, according to analysis of the impact of the 2022 Nationality and Borders Act on the National Referral Mechanism (NRM – the system for identifying and supporting modern slavery victims). Other concerns include waiting times for decisions, people with criminal convictions excluded from support, and the high rate of negative decisions for people referred by Home Office staff. (Source: International Organization for Migration)
- This article highlights the potential impact of the Illegal Migration Act, focusing on the story of Albanian woman who is a survivor of sex trafficking but could face removal from the UK. (Source: Sky News)

International news

Within Europe:

- Over 8,500 people arrived in the Canary Islands over the last two weeks, a third of all their arrivals in 2023. (Source: Reuters)
- Amid a high number of migrants arriving via irregular routes, the EU Commission is looking into tightening up the visa-free scheme within the bloc. (Source: Euronews)

- Germany has implemented measures to help Ukrainian and other refugees find work. (Source: Independent)

Outside Europe, this article tells the story of Higinio Alberto Ramírez, a man who left Honduras due to damage caused by climate change, only to be caught in a tragic fire at a detention centre in Mexico that claimed over 40 lives. (Source: the Guardian)

UK borders and migration policy

Net migration is likely to reduce over the next few years according to this analysis, potentially returning to pre-Brexit levels of about 300,000 by 2030. This is due to factors such as a fall in arrivals from Ukraine and Hong Kong, and students returning home. Migration for work is predicted to account for nearly half of net migration in coming years. (Source: Migration Observatory)

People arriving in the UK in small boats could face 12 months or more in prison, according to legal sentencing guidance relating to the offence of arriving without entry clearance - created by the 2022 Nationality and Borders Act. A gang leader responsible for smuggling up to 10,000 people across the Channel was given an 11 year prison sentence in Belgium. (Sources: Free Movement, Sky News)

This housing newsletter includes updates and commentary on a range of topics including the implications of the Illegal Migration

Act for councils and current issues in the asylum system.
(Source: Chartered Institute of Housing)

Cohesion and integration

Migrant and refugee communities ran over 15 Great Get Together events in Yorkshire supported by The Jo Cox Foundation and Migration Yorkshire, including a tea party in Wakefield and a day trip to Scarborough. (Source: Dewsbury Reporter)

You can visit the London home of Khadambi Asalache, a Kenyan-born poet, artist and civil servant who left the property to the National Trust. Khadambi transformed his home with intricate carvings inspired by his heritage. (Source: National Trust)

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