

Migration news roundup 2

September 2024



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Stories that inspired us this week

From the week the Paralympics opened, read the story of Zakia Khudadadi, an Afghan paralympic Taekwondo athlete now living in France. (Source: the Guardian)

In Melbourne, Australia, Palestinian women fleeing Gaza are being offered work and training in flower arranging by a social enterprise florist, part of a broader effort to support Palestinian newcomers into work. (Source: the Guardian)

International news

In Europe:

- German leader Olaf Scholz promised to impose quicker deportation of refused asylum seekers after the deadly knife attack in the western city of Solingen in which three people died. (Source: the Guardian)

- A new EU visa waiver scheme called 'Etias' will affect UK nationals travelling to the Schengen area from 2025. Visitors must pay a £6 fee every three years. A further scheme, the Entry/Exit System launching in November, will replace passport stamping. (Source: BBC)

Beyond Europe:

- Midwestern US states such as Missouri and North Dakota are embracing migration as a solution to labour shortages and declining populations. A project in St. Louis plans to bring around 2,000 migrants to the city by the end of 2024. (Source: Financial Times)
- Australia has introduced a new limit on how many international students it accepts, with specific limits for different institutions. (Source: BBC)

UK borders and migration policy

The Home Office has come under criticism for habitual overspending (to the tune of £7.6 billion over the last three years) and relying on top-ups from government reserves largely due to somewhat foreseeable asylum and resettlement costs, and on asylum accommodation in particular. Both the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) and the Home Office have warned that

budgetary figures submitted for this financial year are also insufficient, which chimes with the Chancellor's statement a few weeks ago that asylum funding contributed significantly to the black hole in the national budget. (Source: IFS)

This legal briefing explains leave outside the rules; immigration rules and categories do not fit every person's circumstances, and in such cases a person can apply for 'leave outside the rules', although refusals are common. (Source: Free Movement)

As the end of the cricket season approaches, the England and Wales Cricket Board has discovered many instances where cricket clubs signing up amateur players from outside the UK may be contravening immigration rules. For example, some players on a student or visitor visa could be considered a professional sports person by the Home Office, and so may be breaching the terms of their visa. (Source: BBC)

An 'intensive week of action' by Immigration Enforcement teams targeted hundreds of businesses such as car washes thought to be employing people illegally, issuing penalty notices to employers and detaining 85 workers. (Source: Home Office)

Specific migrant groups

In their 2023 annual report, the independent monitoring board of the immigration removal centre at Gatwick has raised concerns that the site is less safe than previously stated, partly due to the transfer of people from prisons who have a 'higher risk profile' than usual immigration detainees. Among the recommendations

it calls for a time limit on immigration detention. (Source: Independent Monitoring Boards)

The High Court has dismissed a legal challenge about the lack of legal aid for a young asylum seeker who recently turned 18 which would enable a legal representative to be funded to attend their asylum interview. (Source: Free Movement)

A briefing looking at Ukrainian migration to the UK highlights that most of those surveyed intend to stay in the UK long term, employment rates have increased, and a majority now pay for their own accommodation. The UK has the fourth highest number of arrivals among European countries at 4%, and Yorkshire and Humber has welcomed around 5% of the UK's Ukrainians. (Source: Migration Observatory)

Cohesion and integration

'Fair Shot' is a project launched for the 2024/5 season to bring football fans together to talk about refugees, partnering with major clubs including Sheffield Wednesday and Rotherham. Meanwhile, unaccompanied asylum-seeking children have taken part in a football tournament in Northern Ireland to promote good community relations. (Sources: Refugee Council, Department of Health NI)

The Orange Iceberg is a sobering mural painted to raise awareness of migrant lives lost at sea, created below the high tide mark on a seawall in Ramsgate, Kent. (Source: Morning Star)

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