Migration news roundup 5 September 2022



- Stories that inspired us this week
- International news
- UK borders and migration policy

- Specific migrant groups
- Cohesion and integration

Stories that inspired us this week

A Ukrainian living in the UK describes her journey to reclaim her birth name after changing her name to help improve employment opportunities. (Source: Metro)

Puppet Mo was out and about in Hull - he's an unaccompanied migrant child and was part of Hull Freedom Festival at the weekend. (Source: Hull Daily Mail)

International news

The Netherlands is pressing ahead with plans to house asylum seekers on cruise ships with a second ship set to be moored at Amsterdam. (Source: Sky News)

There have been a number of news items on pushbacks of migrants. The Greek government withdrew the offer of a medal to an NGO worker who has led rescue missions of refugees in Greek waters, after he spoke out against pushbacks. This comes as a Frontex (EU border control) official says Greece should face closer checks over its treatment of asylum seekers. Across the Bosphorus, Iran and Turkey have been accused by Amnesty of forcibly returning Afghan refugees. (Sources: the Guardian, Info Migrants)

UK borders and migration policy

With the High Court hearing on whether the Rwanda policy is unlawful taking place on 5 September, news coverage on the Rwanda scheme includes:

- The Home Secretary pressed ahead with plans to relocate refugees to Rwanda despite being advised of the high risk of trafficking and exploitation. (Source: The Times)
- The Law Society gave evidence to the House of Lords suggesting the Rwanda partnership may breach international law for example by breaking the UN's principle of non-refoulement, whereby people could face a risk of persecution upon return. (Source: The Law Society Gazette)
- Survivors of the Rwandan genocide who were housed in hostel accommodation in Rwanda have been made homeless to make room for refugees relocated under the UK-Rwanda partnership. (Source: the Guardian)
- A report on asylum seekers facing removal to Rwanda found high levels of suicide risk, highlighting a lack of screening from the Home Office to identify vulnerable individuals who may not be suitable for removal. (Source: Medical Justice)

Channel crossings continue to make the news as numbers of arrivals increase during peak season with over 25,000 people crossing the Channel so far this year. Contracts published show the Home Office has paid over £2.5m to private companies to pick up migrants in small boats. Meanwhile, reports say that

Albanian migrants crossing the Channel could face criminal records checks by Albanian authorities upon arrival in the UK. Finally, this article says government and media are mispresenting the increase in Albanian asylum seekers arriving by small boats, conflating people smugglers with traffickers. (Sources: BBC, Independent, the Guardian)

This opinion piece from an immigration solicitor examines Home Office surveillance of migrants, arguing that both current and previous governments have failed to respond to immigration in a humane and positive way. (Source: the Guardian)

Following the publication of the immigration statistics in August, the Home Office issued a press release highlighting that India is now the country with the highest number of study, work and visit visas in the UK. Meanwhile, this article gives an overview of the new Scale-up visa route. (Sources: Home Office, Free Movement)

Specific migrant groups

As up to 50,000 Ukrainian refugees could experience homelessness due to sponsorships ending, government launched its campaign to encourage more people to sponsor Ukrainian refugees. This updated Migration Observatory briefing on Ukraine includes details of visa grants in the UK. In Scotland another cruise ship will provide temporary accommodation to Ukrainian refugees. (Sources: the Guardian, Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities, Migration Observatory, BBC)

On asylum the media continues to focus on Albania. There are concerns of the lawfulness of government plans to fast track removal of Albanian asylum seekers. In response to negative messaging and figures quoted out of context about Albanian asylum seekers, this article attempts to present the facts through Home Office official statistics. (Sources: Independent, the Guardian)

On children and young people, the President of The Association of Directors of Children's Services (ADCS) warns new government measures to move unaccompanied asylum-seeking children out of hotels fail to address longstanding issues, such as lack of placements, rising costs, inadequacy of funding for care leavers and profiteering from private foster care agencies. (Source: ADCS)

Cohesion and integration

MP Tim Loughton writes about why the UK must do more to meet its commitment to resettle, welcome and support Afghan refugees. He also suggested more ways to help integration for newly arrived refugees, including removing bureaucratic barriers to accessing employment and providing tailored support for women. (Source: Prospect)

A study from the Trades Union Congress found that over 120,000 workers from minority ethnic backgrounds have resigned from their jobs due to racism. Respondents to the study reported experiencing racist jokes and harassment at work. Only 19% of respondents who had experienced harassment reported

the most recent incident to their employer, with half feeling their concerns would not be taken seriously. (Source: the Guardian)

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