Migration news roundup 20 February 2023



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Stories that inspired us this week

Hear another side of the story about people coming to the UK from Albania, from a woman who fled here to claim asylum with her daughters and is now volunteering as an interpreter. (Source: Metro)

University of Sanctuary Aston University is offering five scholarships to people seeking asylum for free degree courses and £25K living costs, funded by a former student. The vice-chancellor said: 'Aston University is committed to … providing a welcoming and supportive environment for sanctuary students.' (Source: Birmingham Mail)

A documentary premiered at the London Film Festival shines a light on Lawand, a profoundly deaf boy who fled Iraq with his family and is flourishing at the Royal School for the Deaf in Derby. You can watch a two minute clip here. (Sources: BBC, Variety)

International news

This two-and-a-half minute video summarises the outcome of an EU summit where European leaders called for more focus on external border control. This comment piece reflects on the implications for the EU's asserted values on rights and racism. (Sources: Euronews, the Guardian)

Australia will soon allow nearly 20,000 refugees to apply for permanent residency, giving them equal rights and opportunities as permanent residents. (Source: the Guardian)

UK borders and migration policy

Following a recommendation from the 2020 Windrush Review, government published a series of documents in a review of its 'compliant' or 'hostile environment' policy for six areas of life (including an evaluation strategy, process maps, an equality impact assessment and a literature review). The second phase of the right to rent evaluation has also been published which found the scheme itself did not increase race discrimination. You can read further analysis of the publications here. (Sources: Home Office, Electronic Immigration Network)

News articles on small boats crossing the Channel repeat points made in earlier articles:

- numbers of arrivals surpass figures from the same point last year
- Sunak's pledge to end small boats crossings through new legislation is destined to fail as there is no evidence it will have a deterrent effect, and a more realistic solution would be to expand safe routes for refugees to come to the UK
- if asylum seekers could apply for asylum from abroad they would not need to make dangerous journeys across the Channel. (Sources: Evening Standard, iNews, Mirror)

Specific migrant groups

Following a riot after a far-right protest outside an asylum hotel in Knowsley, Merseyside, charities warn of the risk of further serious incidents fuelled by the government's messaging about people seeking asylum. This article discusses how far-right groups like Yorkshire-based Patriotic Alternative exploit local tensions and benefit from their ability to use social media. (Sources: Sky, the Guardian)

A moment of silence at 11am on 24 February will mark one year since Russia invaded Ukraine. (Source: Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport)

The Home Office successfully defended itself against a legal challenge claiming discrimination in its treatment of applicants from different countries. The case centred on the requirement for people from Afghanistan to undertake biometrics outside the UK to be granted a visa, while others such as people from Ukrainian can be issued entry clearance without biometrics. The ruling favoured the Home Office on the grounds of different risks to national security in these cases. (Source: Free Movement)

It is expected the 1989 Children's Act will be amended soon allowing the Home Office to act as a 'corporate parent' of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children. This will enable them to legally accommodate these children in hotels. Currently only the Department for Education can act as a legal parent. There is concern that the Home Office does not have the expertise

needed to look after these children. (Source: The Times)

Education secretary Gillian Keegan expressed opposition to expected Home Office plans to cut the number of international students and their right to work after graduation, and reiterated her desire to expand education export revenues instead. (Source: The Pie News)

How have journalists from Hong Kong managed to keep reporting? Read about their media outlets and their UK-based professional association, the Association of Overseas Hong Kong Media Professionals. (Source: Committee to Protect Journalists)

The government decided not to appeal the legal ruling concerning people with pre-settled status issued under the EU settlement scheme. The high court had overruled the requirement for people to reapply within five years or face losing their rights in the UK and be labelled as overstayers. The Home Office is working to implement the judgement. (Source: Financial Times)

Cohesion and integration

This article asserts that language used by the Home Secretary about immigration has contributed to increasing tensions and violence, with particular reference to the recent far-right extremism in Knowsley. (Source: Middle East Eye)

A book chapter on 'the Mediatisation of Migration Issues during the "Refugee Crisis"' compares the UK, Germany and Denmark

as case studies on the different responses to increasing immigration in 2015 and the role played by the media. (Source: Springer)

The latest edition of the magazine Forced Migration Review offers a range of free articles on the topic of socio-economic integration, including a look at social connection in Scotland. An online launch event takes place at 2pm on 22 February. (Source: Oxford University)

As part of the updates to its new website, the Migration Yorkshire research team is promoting different research papers they have been working on with research partners on the subject of integration. Visit the Refugee Integration Yorkshire and Humber section of the website to find out more. (Source: Migration Yorkshire)

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